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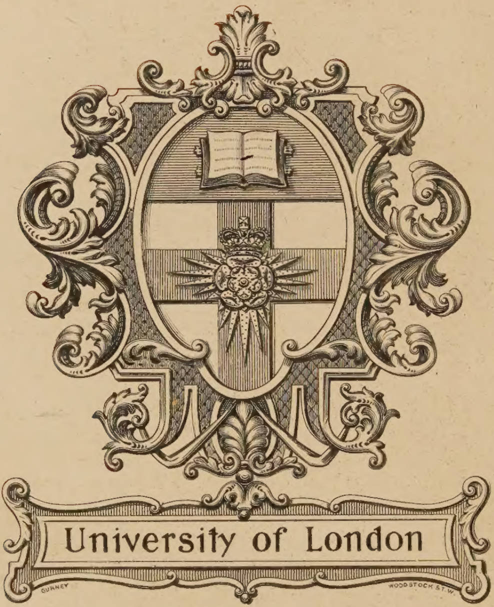
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THE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

AUTHORISED EDITION.

## FOURTH SERIES,

COMMENCING WITH THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

## 58 VICTORIÆ.

## VOLUME XXXII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF MARCH
TO
THE TWENTY-SIXTH DAY OF APRIL
1895.

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29127

Hon. F. D. Smith, M.P.

# ERRATA.

Page 357.—Vote on account of all charges for the Civil Service and Revenue
Departments, *for* £4,439,258
*read* £4,439,268.

Page 1397.—Sat First—*for* Earl of Oxford
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"That this House, at its rising to-morrow, do adjourn until Monday, April 22nd." —(*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*) ... ... ... ... ... ... 1299

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.—Motion made :—

"That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than eleven years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and of his uniform urbanity which have secured for him the respect and esteem of this House."—(*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)... ... 1299

DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. A. J. Balfour.* ... ... ... ... 1301

*Mr. J. McCarthy* ... 1303 *Mr. D. Naoroji* ... ... 1306

*Mr. J. Chamberlain* ... 1304 *Mr. Speaker* ... ... ... 1307

*Mr. John Redmond* ... 1305

Resolved—

"That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for what he has said to the House, and that the same be printed in the Votes of this day and entered on the Journals of the House."—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer.)* ... ... 1307

Resolved, *nemine contradicente*—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, that she will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of her Royal favour upon the right hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House; and to assure Her Majesty that whatever expense Her Majesty shall think proper to be incurred upon that account, this House will make good the same.—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1308

**Naval Works Bill**

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*Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett* 1337
*Mr. J. C. Flynn* ... 1341
*Sir E. Harland* ... ... 1342
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*Mr. Eugène Crean* ... ... 1343
*Sir R. Temple* ... ... 1344
*Mr. R. W. Hanbury* ... ... 1347
*Mr. A. B. Forwood* ... ... 1351
*Mr. G. C. T. Bartley* ... ... 1356
*Sir G. Baden-Powell* ... ... 1360
*Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson* ... 1364
*Mr. Wilson Lloyd* ... ... 1365
*Mr. J. C. Macdona* ... ... 1366

Bill read 2° ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1366

**Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill**—After short Debate, Motion for leave to introduce Bill postponed ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1366

**Metropolitan Police (Receiver) Bill**—Read 3° and passed ... ... ... 1367

**Grocers' Licences Abolition Bill**—Read 1°—[No. 207.] ... ... ... ... 1367

**Institutions for Idiots (Exemption from Rates) Bill**—Read 1°—[No 208] ... 1367

SCOTCH BUSINESS.—On Motion for Adjournment :—Questions, Dr. Clark, Mr. J. H. C. Hozier, and Mr. T. R. Buchanan ; Answer, Home Secretary 1368

## COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 10TH APRIL 1895.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER—Leave to proceed with Election of Speaker announced —*(Chancellor of the Exchequer)* ... ... ... ... ... ... 1369

Motion made—

"That Mr. William Court Gully, Member for Carlisle, take the Chair of this House as Speaker."—*(Mr. S. Whitbread.)* ... ... ... ... 1369

*Mr. A. Birrell* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1372

Motion made—

"That the Right Hon. Sir Matthew White Ridley do take the Chair of this House as Speaker."—*(Sir J. Mowbray.)* ... ... ... ... ... 1373

*Mr. J. L. Wharton* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1379
*Mr. William Court Gully* 1380
*Sir Matthew White Ridley* 1382
*Mr. A. J. Balfour* ... 1383
*Mr. Whitbread* ... ... 1385
*Mr. A. J. Balfour* ... ... 1385
*Chancellor of the Exchequer* ... 1389
*Mr. A. J. Balfour* ... ... 1393

House divided :—Ayes, 285 ; Noes, 274.—(Division List, No. 43.) ... 1394

*Mr. Speaker-Elect* ... 1394
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*Mr. A. J. Balfour* ... ... 1396
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## COMMONS: MONDAY, 22ND APRIL 1895.

MR. SPEAKER—Message from Lords; Mr. Speaker-Elect (William Court Gully, esquire, Q.C.) went up to the House of Peers, and, the House being returned, reported Her Majesty's Approbation to the choice of himself as Speaker ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1399

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CHITRAL—Question, Sir D. Macfarlane; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1403

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**Factories and Workshops Bill.**

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*Mr. H. J. Tennant* ... 1411
*Mr. G. Whiteley* ... 1417
*Mr. Henry Broadhurst* ... 1420
*Mr. B. L. Cohen* ... 1426
*Mr. C. E. Schwann* ... 1430
*Sir F. S. Powell* ... ... 1433
*Mr. Walter Hazell* ... ... 1436
*Mr. H. Seton-Karr* ... ... 1438
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*Sir Alfred Hickman* ... 1456
*Mr. W. Allen* ... ... 1457
*Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson* 1458
*Mr. G. C. T. Bartley* ... 1461
*Sir Charles Dilke* ... 1464
*Sir John Gorst* ... ... 1467
*Under Secretary for Colonies*... 1471
*Mr. W. Whitelaw* ... ... 1476
*Mr. D. Randell* ... ... 1479
*Mr. Henry Matthews* ... ... 1479
*Mr. J. Caldwell* ... ... 1486
*General Goldsworthy* ... ... 1486

Bill read 2ª ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1486

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*Mr. Tomlinson* ... ... 1487
*Mr. Seton-Karr* ... ... 1487
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... ...1488]

House divided :—Ayes 67 ; Noes 27.—(Division List, No. 44) ... 1488

Bill committed to Standing Committee on Trade, &c. ... ... ... 1488

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND)—Question, Dr. Clark ; Answer, Patronage Secretary to the Treasury ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1488

**Coal Mines Regulation Bill :**—Order for 2º postponed until Monday next ... ... 1488

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**Burgh Land Tax (Scotland) Bill :**—Read 1º.—[No. 209] ... ... ... ... 1488

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POPPY CULTIVATION IN BEHAR AND BENARES—Question, Mr. A. Webb ; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... 1491
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EVICTIONS IN THE CROFTING COUNTIES—Mr. J. G. Weir ; Answer, Secretary for Scotland ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1492
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SIAM—Question, Mr. T. Gibson Bowles ; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1493
VOLUNTEER CAMP CANTEENS—Question, Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1494
TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY—Question, Sir T. Esmonde ; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1494
ILLEGAL TRAWLING ON THE SCOTCH COAST—Question, Mr. J. W. Crombie ; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty ... ... ... ... ... 1495

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TRAINING SHIP FOR QUEENSTOWN—Questions, Captain Donelan; Answers, Civil Lord of the Admiralty ... ... ... ... ... ... 1496

OPIUM COMMISSION REPORT—Questions, Mr. H. J. Wilson and Mr. John Ellis; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... 1497

IRISH MAIL SERVICE—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Postmaster General ... ... ... ... ... 1497

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1498

MALWA OPIUM—Question, Mr. C. E. Schwann; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ...... ... 1498

TRACTION ENGINES—Question, Captain Bagot; Answer, President of the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1498

TEMPLEMORE BARRACKS—Question, Mr. J. F. Hogan; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1499

FIELD ARTILLERY BATTERIES—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1499

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS COMMISSION—Question, Mr. C. M. Ramsay; Answer, President of the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... 1500

CHINA AND JAPAN—Question, Mr. T. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1500

IRISH SOLDIERS AND THE SHAMROCK—Questions, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Secretary for War; [Mr. Speaker] ... .. ... ... 1500

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY—Question, Mr. J. C. Macdona; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1502

TITHE ON AGRICULTURAL LAND—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1502

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL—Questions, Mr. T. R. Buchanan, Mr J. H. C. Hozier, and Mr. A. B. Forwood; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1503

SCOTCH GRAND COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. J. H. Dalziel; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1503

COURSE OF BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. William Redmond and Mr. J. H. Dalziel; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... 1503

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

THE LATE SPEAKER:—Motion made—

"That the Order for the Committee on Her Majesty's Most Gracious Answer to the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion."—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer.)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1504

Motion agreed to:—House went into Committee ... ... ... 1504

(In Committee) Motion made—

"That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the Right Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, the late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the Office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of him, the said Right Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel."—*(Chancellor of the Exchequer.)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1504

Amendment proposed—
"In line 1, to leave out '£4,000,' and to insert '£1,000.'"—(*Mr. J. Keir Hardie.*) ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1504
Mr. Keir Hardie appointed a Teller, but no Member being willing to act as the second Teller the Chairman declared that the Ayes had it; Main Question agreed to; Resolution to be reported to-morrow 1505
House resumed.

CHARITY COMMISSION—Motion made—
"That, in the opinion of this House, in order to secure greater Parliamentary control over the work now entrusted to the Charity Commission and an administration of the same more in harmony with public opinion, the Commission should be reconstituted and placed as a subordinate Department under a Minister of State."—(*Mr. John Ellis.*) ... ... ... ... 1505
DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. Harry Lawson* ... ... ... ... 1513
*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen* ... 1520
*Sir Stafford Northcote* ... 1525
*Parliamentary Charity Commissioner* ... ... 1528
*Mr. Jesse Collings* ... ... 1535
*Mr. J. W. Lowther* ... ... 1542
*Vice President of Council* ... 1548
*Sir F. S. Powell* ... ... 1553
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**Liquor Traffic Bills.**—Orders for 2° postponed. ... ... ... ... ... 1557

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Tramways (Local Authorities) Bill:**

Motion made, "That the Bill be now read 2°.—(*Mr. C. E. Schwann.*) 1557
DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. T. H. Bolton* ... ... ... ... ... 1558
*Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson* 1560
*President of the Board of Trade* 1562
Motion agreed to, and Bill referred to a Select Committee ... ... 1564

**Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill.**

Motion made, "That the Bill be now read 2°."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)... 1564
DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. C. Diamond* ... ... ... ... ... 1569
*Mr. William Redmond* ... 1570
*Chief Secretary for Ireland* 1576
*Mr. T. W. Russell* ... 1577
*Mr. David Plunket* ... 1581
*Mr. W. G. E. Macartney* 1582
*Mr. Alfred Webb*... ... 1583
*Mr. W. Johnston* ... 1584
*Mr. D. Crilly*... ... ... 1585
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1591, 1594]
*Mr. J. Havelock Wilson* ... 1595
*Sir C. Cameron* ... ... 1596
*Mr. Dunbar Barton* ... ... 1897
*Mr. Michael Austin* ... ... 1598
House divided:—Ayes 168; Noes 69.—(Division List No. 45.) ... 1600
Motion made, "That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade.—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*) ... ... ... ... ... 1600
DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. D. Crilly* ... ... ... ... ... 1600
*Mr. W. Johnston* ... 1600
*Lord Frederick Hamilton* ... 1602
House divided:—Ayes 149; Noes 69.—(Division List No. 46.) ... 1602

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MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.—Queen's Answer to Address (9th April)—
Resolution reported, and agreed to ... ... ... ... ... 1602

Bill to carry out Resolution brought in, and read 1°.—[No. 211.] ... 1603

DISTRESS BILL [LORDS]—Considered in Committee, and reported as amended 1603

**Larceny Act Amendment Bill.**—Read 2°. ... ... ... ... ... 1603

RULES OF THE ROAD AT SEA—Motion made to add name of Attorney General to Select Committee. After short Debate, Motion stood over... 1604

## COMMONS: THURSDAY, 25TH APRIL 1895.

**Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.**—Read 1°.—[No. 212] ... ... 1605

**Lands Clauses (Taxation of Costs) Bill.**—[H.L.]—Read 1°.—[No. 213] ... ... 1605

### *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

**London and North Western Railway Bill:—**

DEBATE ON ORDER FOR SECOND READING—

*Mr. D. Lloyd-George* ... 1605
[*Mr. Speaker* ... 1606, 1608]
*Mr. David Plunket* ... 1607
*Mr. Brynmor Jones* ... 1607
*Mr. A. C. Morton* ... ... 1609
*Mr. Bryn Roberts* ... ... 1609
*Mr. John Burns* ... ... 1609
*President Board of Trade* ... 1610

Debate adjourned till May 9th ... ... ... ... ... ... 1610

### *QUESTIONS.*

AGED POOR COMMISSION—Questions, Mr. J. Chamberlain, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, and Mr. John Burns; Answers, President of the Local Government Board and Secretary to the Treasury ... ... 1610

VILLAGE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN SCOTLAND—Question, Sir J. Fergusson; Answer, Secretary for Scotland ... ... ... ... ... ... 1611

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN INDIA—Question, Mr. W. S. Caine; Answer, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... ... ... ... 1612

MYSTERIOUS DEATH IN BALLO LOCH, FIFE—Question, Mr. Herbert Paul; Answer, Lord Advocate ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1613

SURGEON MAJOR GENERAL GIRAUD—Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1613

MOMBASA AND UGANDA RAILWAY—Question, Sir Albert Rollit; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... 1614

CADASTRAL SURVEYS IN INDIA—Question, Mr. H. T. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... ... ... 1614

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CHITRAL—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1615

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS—Questions, Mr. E. H. Hulse and Mr. H. S. Foster; Answers, Vice President of the Council ... ... ... 1616

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS—Question, Mr. Herbert Paul; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury ... ... ... ... ... ... .. 1616

EMPLOYMENT OF SLAVES BY BRITISH SUBJECTS—Question, Mr. Thomas Bayley; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... 1617

PATENTS—Questions, Mr. A. C. Morton and Mr. John Burns; Answers, President of the Board of Trade ... ... ... ... ... ... 1618

DISTRESS IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1619

MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE NENAGH UNION, IRELAND—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Chief Secretary for Ireland ... ... 1619

ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT—Questions, Mr. Elliott Lees; Answers, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1620

RE-DIRECTION OF LETTERS—Question, Mr. Herbert Paul; Answer, Postmaster General ... ... ... ... ... ... ... . . 1621

JAPANESE COMMERCIAL PRIVILEGES IN CHINA—Question, Sir Richard Temple; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... 1621

OUTBREAKS OF SHEEP SCAB IN HAMPSHIRE—Question, Mr. W. H. Myers; Answer, President of the Board of Agriculture ... ... ... ... 1622

HAWAII—Questions, Captain Donelan, Dr. Macgregor, and Mr. J. F. Hogan; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... 1622

OUTBREAK AT BRASS—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ... 1624

SUB-POSTMASTER OF ASHLEAGH, COUNTY MAYO—Questions, Mr. R. Ambrose and Mr. W. Johnston; Answers, Postmaster General ... ... ... 1625

MACHINE GUNS—Question, Viscount Curzon; Answer, Secretary for War... 1625

DISEASED SHEEP—Questions, Sir H. Maxwell and Mr. C. B. Renshaw; Answers, President of the Board of Agriculture... ... ... ... 1625

SCOTCH BOUNDARIES—Question, Mr. J. H. C. Hozier; Answer, Secretary for Scotland... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1626

GLAMORGANSHIRE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION SCHEME—Question, Mr. David Thomas; Answer, Vice President of the Council ... ... ... 1627

MEASURES IN THE POTTERIES—Question, Mr. W. Allen; Answer, President of the Board of Trade ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1627

WELSH EMIGRANTS—Question, Mr. David Thomas; Answer, President of the Board of Trade... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1628

MACHINERY OF WARSHIPS—Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1628

ROYAL LIVER FRIENDLY SOCIETY—Question, Mr. J. Heath; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1628

REPORTS OF ROYAL COMMISSIONS—Questions, Mr. W. S. Caine and Mr. Cyril Dodd; Answers, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... 1629

DISMISSAL OF AN ARMY SURGEON IN MADRAS—Question, Mr. W. S. Caine; Answer, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... ... ... 1630

PRISON CLERKS—Question, Mr. T. Lough; Answer, Home Secretary ... 1630

HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS COMMISSION — Questions, Mr. J. G. Weir and Dr. D. Macgregor; Answers, Secretary to the Treasury ... ... 1631

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KITCHEN BOILER EXPLOSIONS—Question, Mr. J. G. Weir; Answer, President of the Board of Trade ... ... ... ... ... ... 1631

WINDING-UP OF PUBLIC COMPANIES—Questions, Mr. T. Gibson Bowles and Mr. E. Boulnois; Answers, President of the Board of Trade ... ... 1632

OFFICE OF WOODS AND FORESTS—Question, Mr. Walter Long; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... 1633

GAMBLING IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES—Question, Mr. E. Heneage; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... 1634

SCOTCH GRAND COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. J. G. Weir; Answer, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1634

NAVAL WORKS BILL—Questions, Mr. T. Gibson Bowles and Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answers, Chancellor of the Exchequer ... ... ... ... 1634

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS :—Chancellor of the Exchequer gave notice that on Monday next he would submit a Motion for offering further time to the Government for Government Business ... ... ... ... ... 1634

**Mr. Speaker's Retirement Bill.**—Read 2°. ... ... ... ... ... 1635

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill:—**

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON MOTION FOR LEAVE TO BRING IN BILL—

*Secretary for Scotland* ... 1635
*Mr. A. J. Balfour* ... 1651
*Dr. Farquharson* ... 1653
*Dr. G. B. Clark* ... ... 1655
*Sir D. Macfarlane* ... 1656
*Dr. D. Macgregor* ... 1657
*Mr. Graham Murray* ... 1660
*Mr. J. G. Weir* ... ... 1664
*Mr. T. R. Buchanan*... ... 1665
*Mr. M. H. Shaw-Stewart* ... 1666
*Mr. Mark Napier* ... ... 1668

Leave given; Bill read 1°.—[No. 214.] ... ... ... ... ... 1670

**Local Government (Scotland) Bill:—**

Motion made, "That leave be given to introduce Bill."—*(Secretary for Scotland.)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1670

DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Sir Charles Pearson* ... ... ... ... 1675
*Mr. C. B. Renshaw* ... 1676
*Dr. Macgregor* ... ... 1679
*Mr. Graham Murray* ... 1680
*Mr. H. T. Anstruther* ... 1680
*Mr. J. Caldwell* ... ... 1681
*Secretary for Scotland* ... 1682
*Mr. John Wilson (Govan)* ... 1682

Leave given; Bill read 1°.—[No. 215] ... ... ... ... ... 1683

**Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill:—**

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING—*Mr. Graham Murray* ... 1683
*Mr. C. B. Renshaw* ... 1684
*Mr Harry Smith* ... 1688
*Sir Charles Pearson* ... 1689
*Mr. Donald Crawford* ... 1691
*Lord Advocate*... ... ... 1693
*Mr. A. C. Morton* ... ... 1696
*Mr John Burns* ... ... 1698
*Dr. Macgregor* ... ... 1699

Bill read 2° ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1700

**Light Railways Bill.**
Motion made, "That leave be given to introduce Bill."—*(President of the Board of Trade.)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1700
DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. Chaplin* ... ... ... ... ... 1706
*Mr. J. Grant Lawson* ... 1709
*Colonel W. Kenyon-Slaney* 1710
*Mr. E. Strachey* ... ... 1714
*Captain Bethell* ... ... 1716
*Mr. W. Crosfield* ... 1717
*Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson* 1718
*Mr. J. A. Pease* ... ... 1719
*Mr. T. H. Bolton* ... ... 1719
*Mr. J. W. Logan* ... ... 1721
*Sir M. Hicks-Beach* ... ... 1722
*Mr. J. G. Weir* ... ... 1725

Leave given; Bill read 1°.—[No. 216] ... ... ... ... ... 1726

**Tramways (Ireland)—No. 2—Bill.**
Considered in Committee; Progress reported ... ... ... ... 1728

**Documentary Evidence Bill.**
Passed through Committee and read 3° ... ... ... ... ... 1728

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS—Return Ordered.—*(Mr. Conybeare.)*... ... 1728

## *MOTION.*

**Fires (False Alarms) Bill.**—Read 1°.—[No. 217]... ... ... ... ... 1728

## COMMONS: FRIDAY, 26TH APRIL 1895.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES) FOR 1893, PART I. (CRIMINAL)—Copy presented ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1729

NAVY (ENGINES AND BOILERS OF SHIPS)—Copy of Table presented—[No. 234.] 1729

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS (EXPENSES)—Committee on Monday next ... 1729

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL)—Report ... ... ... 1729

## *QUESTIONS.*

VOLUNTEER COMBINED DRILL—Question, Colonel Wyndham Murray; Answer, Secretary for War ... ... ... ... ... ... 1730
ABERDARON DISTRICT BOARD, PWLLHELI—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, Vice President of the Council ... ... ... ... ... 1730
LOCAL TAXATION—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, President of the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... ... ... 1731
INFLUENZA —Question, Mr. John Aird; Answer, Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... ... ... 1732
LONDON CAB TRADE—Question, Mr. John Aird; Answer, Home Secretary 1732
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY—Question, Mr. H. T. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, Civil Lord of the Admiralty ... ... ... ... ... ... 1733
PERJURY CASE (ALLEGED)—Question, Mr. S. Woods; Answer, Home Secretary ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1733

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POTATO CROPS IN ROSS-SHIRE—Question, Mr. J. G. Weir; Answer, Lord Advocate ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1734
ASSISTANT OVERSEERS—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone; Answer, President of the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... ... ... 1734
DENBIGH CATTLE MARKET—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts; Answer, President of the Local Government Board ... ... ... ... 1735
COCK-FIGHTING—Question, Mr. C. B. Renshaw; Answer, Lord Advocate ... 1735
WOMEN IN BRITISH INDIA COAL MINES—Questions, Mr. A. D. Provand; Answers, Under Secretary for the Home Department ... ... ... 1736
TRADE AND NAVIGATION RETURNS—Question, Mr. A. M. Brookfield; Answer, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade ... ... ... ... 1736
JAPAN AND CHINA—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs ... ... ... ... ... ... 1737
WORKMEN'S DWELLINGS IN SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. J. Caldwell; Answer, Lord Advocate ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1737
PUBLICATION OF WILLS—Question, Mr. J. Aird; Answer, Secretary to the Treasury ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1738

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

RATING OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY—On Motion that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair, Amendment proposed—

"That the exemption of Government property from rating is wrong in principle and unjust in its operation to the local authorities and to the general body of ratepayers, and ought to be terminated by legislation, placing such property on an equality for rating purposes with that of other ratepayers."—*(Sir Albert Rollit.)* ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... 1738

DEBATE FOLLOWING—*Mr. Pickersgill* ... ... ... ... ... ... 1751
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... ... 1753]
*Colonel Hughes* ... ... 1754
*Mr. H. E. Kearley* ... ... 1756
*Mr. Burdett-Coutts* ... ... 1757
*Mr. W. F. D. Smith* ... ... 1765
*Mr. J. Caldwell* ... ... 1766
*Mr. W. P. Byles* ... ... 1767
*Mr. G. C. T. Bartley* ... ... 1768
*Mr. Harry Lawson* ... ... 1769
*Mr. Gibson Bowles* ... ... 1770
*Dr. Macgregor* ... ... 1771
*Secretary to the Treasury* 1772
*Mr. W. R. Bousfield* ... 1776
[*Mr. Speaker* ... ... 1777]
*Mr. Walter Long* ... 1777
*Mr. James Stuart* ... 1778
*Mr. John Burns*... ... 1779
*Mr. James Rowlands* ... 1782
*Mr. H. T. Anstruther* ... 1783
*Sir Albert Rollit*... ... 1783
*Secretary to the Treasury* 1783

House divided—Ayes 65; Noes 64.—(Division List, No. 48) ... ... 1783

Main Question again proposed—*(Sir John Lubbock)* ... ... ... 1783

House counted—40 Members not being present, House adjourned at a Quarter before Eight o'clock ... ... ... ... ... 1784

END OF VOL. III.

# BILLS DEALT WITH IN VOL. XXXII.

| *Title of Bill.* | *Progress.* |
|---|---|
| Agricultural Company of Mauritius | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Archdeaconry of Cornwall | Read $2^{a}$, Mar. 29. |
| Army Annual | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Australian Colonies Customs Duties | Royal Assent, Mar. 28. |
| Burgh Land Tax (Scotland) | Read $1^{o}$, April 22. |
| Church Patronage | Read $2^{o}$, and referred to Grand Committee on Law, April 3. |
| Coal Mines Regulation | Read $1^{o}$, April 4. |
| Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act (1879) Amendment | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Court of Criminal Appeal | Read $2^{o}$, and referred to a Select Committee, April 3. |
| Courts of Law Fees (Scotland) | Read $2^{a}$, April 8. |
| Crédit Foncier of Mauritius | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) | Read $1^{o}$, April 25. |
| Documentary Evidence | Read $3^{o}$, April 25. |
| Elections (Second Ballot and Returning Officers' Expenses) | Withdrawn. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Acton) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Bristol) | Read $1^{a}$, April 8. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Hornsey) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Leeds) | Read $1^{a}$, April 8. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Liverpool) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Lowestoft) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Manchester) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Pwllheli) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |
| Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Weston-super-Mare) | Read $1^{a}$, April 2. |

| *Title of Bill.* | *Progress.* |
|---|---|
| Established Church (Wales) Bill | Read 2°, April 8. |
| Evidence in Criminal Cases | Dropped. |
| Evidence in Criminal Cases (No. 2) | Read 3ª, and Passed April 5. |
| Factories and Workshops | Committee to Standing Committee on Trade, April 22. |
| Farm Servants (Scotland) | In Committee, April 3. |
| Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) | Read 2°, April 25. |
| Fires (False Alarms) | Read 1°, April 25. |
| Fisheries Acts Amendment | Read 1°, Mar. 27. |
| Fisheries (Close Season) (Ireland) | Read 1°, April 5. |
| Grand Juries (Ireland) (No. 2) | Read 3ª, and passed April 5. |
| Great Eastern Railway | Read 3°, April 5. |
| Great Southern and Western Railway | In Committee April 5. |
| Grocers' Licences Abolition | Read 1°, April 9. |
| Handloom Weavers (Ireland) | Withdrawn. |
| House Tax Consolidation | Read 1°, April 4. |
| Institution for Idiots (Exemption from Rates) | Read 1°, April 9. |
| Irish Lights Board | Debate on 2R., Mar. 27. |
| Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway | Order for Consideration, Mar. 26. |
| Land Clauses (Taxation of Costs) | Read 1°, April 25. |
| Land Law (Ireland) | Read 2°, April 5. |
| Land Transfer | Read 3ª, and Passed, April 8. |
| Larceny Act Amendment | Read 2°, April 24. |
| Law of Distress Amendment Act (1888) | In Committee, April 24. |
| Letting of Sporting Rights | Read 1°, April 2. |
| Light Railways | Read 1°, April 25. |
| Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Local Government (Scotland) | Read 1°, April 25. |
| Market Gardeners' Compensation | Consideration Postponed, April 1 |
| Market Gardeners' Compensation (No. 2) | Reported without Amendment, Mar. 25. |
| Merchandise Marks (Files) Bill | Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee, April 3. |
| Metropolis Management (St. Paul Deptford) | Withdrawn, Mar. 26. |
| Metropolitan Police (Provisional Order) | Read 1°, April 25. |
| Metropolitan Police (Receiver) | Read 3° and Passed, April 9. |
| Mortgagees' Costs | Read 2ª, Mar. 28. |
| National Assemblies and Imperial Federation | Withdrawn, Mar. 26. |
| Naval Works | Read 2°, April 9. |
| North Staffordshire Railway | 3R. deferred Mar. 25. |
| Outdoor Relief (Ireland) | 2R. deferred Mar. 29. |
| Patent Designs and Trade Marks Acts (1883 to 1888) Amendment | Read 1°, April 1. |
| Perjury | Order for Committee, April 8. |

| *Title of Bill.* | *Progress.* |
|---|---|
| Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) ... | Read 1°, April 8. |
| Places of Worship (Leasehold Enfranchisement) | Read 1°, Mar. 26. |
| Poor Law (Electors) Amendment... ... ... | Debate on 2R. April 3. |
| Post Office Act (1891) Amendment ... ... | Read 1°, April 3. |
| Purchase of Land ... ... ... ... ... | Read 1°, April 5. |
| Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Channel Islands Children) ... ... ... ... | Read 1ª, April 9. |
| Registers of Electors (Duplicate Entries) ... | Read 1°, Mar. 28. |
| Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children ... | Read 1°, April 8. |
| Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) (No. 1) ... | Committee of Whole House deferred April 9. |
| Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) (No. 2) ... | Dropped, Mar. 28. |
| Shop Hours ... ... ... ... ... | Royal Assent, April 9. |
| Solicitors (Ireland)... ... ... ... ... | Amendments Reported, April 5. |
| Stannaries Court Abolition ... ... ... | Read 2ª, April 9. |
| Statute Law Revision ... ... ... ... | Committee nominated, Mar. 26. |
| Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) ... ... | Read 2°, April 3. |
| Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment ... ... ... ... ... | Read 1°, Mar. 27. |
| Supreme Court (Officers) ... ... ... ... | Read 1°, Mar. 25. |
| Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) ... ... ... | In Committee, April 25. |
| Tramways (Local Authorities) ... ... ... | Read 2°, April 24. |
| William Hancock & Co. (Conversion of Shares) | Royal Assent, April 9 |

THE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

*(Authorised Edition)*

IN THE

*FOURTH SESSION* OF THE *TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET AUGUST 4, 1892, IN THE FIFTY-SIXTH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1895.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Monday, 25th March 1895.*

### CHITRAL.

LORD **KNUTSFORD**: I desire to ask whether the Government can give the House any further information about Chitral?

THE **UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA** (Lord REAY): Beyond the information given to the House on the 21st instant, in reply to Lord Cross's question, and a report identical with that which appeared in the newspapers about the melancholy loss of Captain Ross and his party near Boni, the Secretary of State has no information. It is believed that the British Agent with 300 men is still invested in the Chitral Fort, and the Government of India have reported that the Chitral relief force will be despatched as soon as it can be made ready—by April 1, if possible. So far as the Secretary of State is aware, the Government of India have not recognised anyone as the new Mehtar of Chitral. It is not known for certain where Umra Khan is, but he is supposed to be still in Chitral territory. Some of his men are reported by Lieutenant Jones to be holding the Fort of Drassan, to the north of Chitral. No information has been received from Dr. Robertson direct of later date than March 1.

### GRAND JURIES (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

The House went into Committee on this Bill, and after certain Drafting Amendments to Clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9, proposed by Lord Morris, had been agreed to, the Bill passed through Committee, and was reported.

### EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.

LORD **HALSBURY**, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, that if his only object was to get the Second Reading of the Measure, it would probably be sufficient to mention to their Lordships that it had four or five times previously passed the Second Reading stage, and had three times actually passed through the House. But he really thought the time was come when people should understand what absurd anomalies existed in the law as it at present stood. If their Lordships glanced at the Schedule of the Acts that it was intended to repeal by the Bill, it would be seen that in those different Acts there was a provision which enabled accused persons to give evidence on their own behalf; and matters had now come to this, that it required an education—a special education—on the part of those who presided at criminal trials to know whether or not the persons accused before them were capable of giving evidence or not. He might illustrate what he said by referring to an incident that took place before the Recorder of London. Two persons were indicted for an offence, and each of them desired to call his wife to give evidence in his behalf. They were informed that if the women were their wives, they could not be called, whereupon one of the men said that he was not married to the woman he wished to call, though they had long lived together. On this, the man was judicially informed that this woman could be called to give evidence, and she was called and made a credible witness; but in the other case, as the accused was married, the woman could not be called. That would give some idea of the present state of the law in this respect. Since one of the Bills which he had brought forward had passed their Lordships' House, a very remarkable case had been tried before the Lord Chief Justice. It was a case in which an old man, 80 years of age, named Barber, had been connected in some way with a prospectus issued in reference to the ship *Great Eastern*. He was charged by means of the prospectus with obtaining money by false pretences; but, probably in consideration of his age, he was sentenced to only a comparatively light punishment—four or five months' imprisonment. But the case arose again, subsequently, in civil proceedings, and the same point on which he was convicted, whether the allegation in the prospectus was a falsehood, once more came up. In this civil proceeding the man was capable of being called as a witness, and, to the satisfaction of everyone, including the learned Judge who tried the cause, he was acquitted by the jury of having obtained money by false pretences, and for the best of reasons—that that which was alleged to be a false pretence was, in fact, true. On that occasion the Lord Chief Justice took the opportunity of pointing out the hardship, the gross injustice, that this old gentleman suffered through the law having prevented him from being called as a witness in the original trial. Whatever was the principle which guided the law originally, he would ask whether it was reasonably possible to maintain the system under which every person indicted under the Acts mentioned in the Schedule to the Bill could be called as a witness, whereas every person who was excluded from them could not. But the question did not quite rest even on that. He had mentioned before, that in this country, unlike many other countries, everybody was entitled to assume to himself the character of the prosecutor, and, assuming that character, unless the Attorney General intervened, he practically framed the charge which should be made against a person. A learned Judge had told him that in his view it was quite possible in such circumstances for a person to take the opportunity of so framing the charge, by varying its legal quality, as to make it incapable for a person proceeded against to be called as a witness. What sense or reason could there be in such a system as that? The present state of the law had been denounced by nearly every person conversant with its administration. The present Bill was almost identical with the others that had preceded it except in one particular—that Ireland was not included in it. For his own part he believed this was a defect in the Bill, but it was a defect in which he willingly acquiesced, because he hoped it would prevent the obstruction which the preceding Bills had met with in the other House. Rightly or wrongly, hon. Members from Ireland had protested against the Bill being passed, and, in deference to their objection, it had been suggested that Ireland should be left out of the measure. Accordingly, he hoped there would be no obstruction to the present Bill, seeing that there was an almost universal desire in this country that every person should have the power to give evidence if he wished to do so. It must not be supposed the Acts to which he had referred were trivial in their character. Some of the Acts which permitted certain persons to be called as witnesses were Acts under which a prisoner might be sentenced to penal servitude for life; but if a person was indicted for murder he could not be called as a witness. A circumstance bearing on this occurred in a case which was tried not long since, and it might a little shock the public conscience —a case in which it was stated that a prisoner about to be sentenced to death for murder declared that he could have proved where he was at the time of the murder if the law had permitted him to be called to give evidence. Without, however, relying on such an incident, the mere fact that a prisoner was now able to say that the law prevented him from proving his innocence, by reason that he was not allowed to give evidence in his own behalf, could not be ignored. He had only one further observation to make. His noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack had a similar Bill before the House last year, and he would gladly leave the further conduct of the present Bill to him if he would undertake it. The reason why he had thought it right to move the Second Reading was, that on the 23rd of July last his noble and learned Friend moved that his Bill should be postponed. He moved, on the contrary, that it should be read a second time, and it was so read, with the acquiescence of the noble and learned Lord. He was not in the least suggesting that the Lord Chancellor was not quite as anxious as he himself was that this Bill should pass; for he believed the views of the noble and learned Lord on the question were identical with his own, but he had thought that, under the circumstances, it would be better for him to move the Second Reading on this occasion. There was a strong feeling that the Bill should be no longer postponed, and he begged to move that it be read a second time.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell) said, he did not propose to argue in support of the Bill. He entirely concurred with what had been said by his noble and learned Friend, and on many previous occasions he had given his reasons for thinking why such a Bill should be passed into law. Personally, he entertained the strongest opinion with regard to it, and nobody could be more anxious than he was to see it become an Act of Parliament. On two previous occasions he had introduced a Bill of this description. During the time his noble Friend was on the Woolsack he, on more than one occasion, introduced such a Bill, and he had himself done so. Having introduced a Bill to carry out that purpose during the present Session, he should, of course, exercise all the influence he possessed to ensure the Bill being passed into law. He was quite satisfied that there was no indisposition whatever on the part of his colleagues to see this Bill become law. There were still some who retained what, in his opinion, were prejudices against the change; but he believed those feelings would disappear as soon as the law came into operation. The possible mischief would, in his judgment, be infinitesimal. He thought, however, there would be an advantage in the Bill being a Government Bill, and that his own Bill would, therefore, have more chance of being passed when it went down to the other House than that of his noble and learned Friend.

*Lord ASHBOURNE said, he entirely agreed with his two noble Friends in their desire to see a change in the law as suggested by these Bills. But as one interested in the administration of the law in Ireland, he was obliged to express regret at Ireland being excluded from them. Every single argument which had been applied increased, if possible, the case in Ireland's behalf; and, he ventured to think, that there was not a single Judge or any other person interested in the administration of the law in Ireland who would not deplore the omission. Still, he felt the force of what the noble Lord behind him had said, namely, that he had only omitted Ireland from the provisions of the Bill because he felt that was the most expedient way of getting it through the House of Commons. There was a large number of Members from Ireland who deemed it right to oppose this change in the law, so far as their country was concerned, so that by the omission it was sought to conciliate their objections and induce them to remain quiescent during the various stages of the Bill. But there were, it must be remembered, also many

Irish Members in the House of Commons representing different opinions in Ireland who would very much feel the omission, and it was not difficult to tell how they would view the matter. There were many earnest advocates of this change; and whilst he should gladly welcome any such change in the law in any portion of the Queen's dominions, he could but deeply regret that it had not been made applicable to Ireland.

*Lord MORRIS wished to offer his testimony in favour of the Bill. Having had a long experience, however, of the administration of justice as a Judge, and seeing the necessity for such a change in the law as was proposed, he felt rather strongly the omission of Ireland from the Bill, and deplored even more than that omission the reason that had been assigned for it. It was not a reason founded upon any argument—not a reason at all—but a statement that because certain Irish Members in the House of Commons might oppose the Bill, therefore, beforehand, their obstruction was to be acceded to by leaving Ireland out of the Bill altogether. He had often heard objections made as to exceptional legislation for Ireland when the so-called Coercion Act was passed. It was, in fact, a stock argument; but what were they doing now? They were taking an exceptional course by omitting to legislate for Ireland, and by leaving the present law, which was admittedly bad, in exactly the same state while the remedy was being applied to this country. He had heard, on the other hand, that now-a-days legislation should be granted both to Ireland and to England on precisely the same lines—an argument which was always used when there was any question of the extension of the Franchise, and one which was largely used when the Municipal Franchise Bill was before the House of Commons a few days since. In this matter they were simply yielding to a force which ought not to be yielded to; if such a course as was being pursued on this occasion were allowed to continue, it would have the effect of encouraging persons to object to almost everything. He should certainly move in the Standing Committee, if that stage was reached, to leave out the clause exempting Ireland from the operation of the Bill, and if not successful on that occasion he should oppose the Third Reading.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, there was nothing more magnificent than the resolution of his noble Friend that he would never yield to the House of Commons in this matter; the Members of the House of Commons were equally determined never to yield to them, and the result of that was, that for ten years these atrocious anomalies had gone on in spite of all the efforts of that House to prevent them. He thought they might begin with a somewhat lower standard of virtue in view of the practical circumstances of the case. He had an eirenical suggestion to make; they were the happy possessors of a Bill which owned two parents, and he suggested that while the Government Bill which was intended to pass should only apply to England, his noble Friend's Bill should apply to both England and Ireland, and should go down in order to satisfy the feelings of the Irish on both sides of the House, and give them an opportunity of expressing those virtuous opinions which had been referred to.

Bill read $2^a$.

### EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES (No. 2) BILL.

Read $2^a$. (*The Lord Chancellor.*)

### CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1879, AMENDMENT BILL.

Report of Amendments agreed to.

### RICHMOND LUNATIC ASYLUM.

The Earl of ERNE asked Her Majesty's Government—(1) Whether an authoritative Report has ever been given in favour of the health and suitableness of the Richmond Lunatic Asylum, Dublin; (2) whether the two Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland have advised that it can be continued with advantage to the health of the inmates; (3) whether the Medical Superintendent of the Asylum has drawn constant attention to the unfitness of the present site for the purposes of an Asylum; (4) whether all Lunatic Asylums are now built out of towns; and whether the Richmond Asylum is situated in a poor part of Dublin and surrounded by many old tenement houses; (5) whether the Board of Control lately insisted upon the abandonment of the Derry Asylum because it was situated on the outskirts of the town?

*LORD RIBBLESDALE: The Chief Public Health Officer in Dublin recently reported favourably on the healthiness of the site of the Richmond Asylum. He found that some limited portions of the soil had been contaminated by sewage in the vicinity of old drains, but that, he considered, could be remedied. The Inspectors of lunatics have advised that, with certain alterations which are now about to be made, the Richmond Asylum can be continued with advantage as an institution for the care and treatment of the insane poor of the city of Dublin. The resident Medical Superintendent has stated that, in his opinion, the site is not a suitable one for an Asylum. Much has, however, been done to improve it by the execution of a complete system of drainage, and the purchase of some additional land, and alterations and additions are now in contemplation for the improvement of the buildings. Lunatic Asylums are not now built in towns, but many such institutions still exist in very populous neighbourhoods. The Richmond Asylum is situated on elevated ground on the north side of Dublin, and on one side only is in close proximity to tenement houses. The Board of Control lately advised the abandonment of the existing Londonderry Asylum and the purchase of a new site outside the city, because the land attached to the existing Asylum was wholly insufficient, and was overlooked on every side by occupied buildings—a condition of things in no way similar to the surroundings of the site of the Richmond Asylum.

*LORD ASHBOURNE said that, as far as he could gather from the statement of the noble Lord representing the Irish Government, two Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland had reported in favour of this, and he trusted that that document would be laid on the Table, because it would be read by people in Ireland with considerable interest and curiosity. This Asylum, which was the largest Lunatic Asylum in Ireland, had been the subject of a great variety of misfortunes during recent years, with outbreaks of sickness and a series of calamities which had attracted much public attention, and every one knew that it was entirely out of keeping with all the requirements of modern lunacy establishments, which should be built in country districts, thus giving the patients opportunities of enjoying the open air, and some occupation, such as gardening, to assist in the recovery of their minds. The noble Lord stated on a former occasion that it was contemplated building a large Asylum at Port Rane for the accommodation of a large number of lunatics, about, he thought, 1,000, which were at present confined in the Richmond Asylum, where, at the present moment, there were 400 in excess of the legitimate number that institution should accommodate. When it was suggested that to make the Richmond Asylum even tolerable for the small number that might remain in it after the erection of the Port Rane Asylum, would involve a cost of at least £65,000, the question was raised whether it would not be better to add that to the large moneys which might possibly be gained by the sale of the site on which the Asylum stood, and, saving the expense of buying the additional land to which the noble Lord had referred, make a new departure. Of course he could not expect the noble Lord to be prepared to discuss all the local details, with which Irishmen possessing a knowledge of the locality alone could deal, but he wished to know whether the Government would have any objection to furnishing the House with copies of the Report to which he had referred.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE said, the noble Lord's suggestion was a practical one. If things were as bad as suggested (as he agreed they appeared to be), it might be better to use the £60,000 which was going to be spent at Richmond towards enlarging Port Rane, and accommodating the lunatics of the district. That had occurred to the Irish Officer, and they telegraphed to know what it would cost to make Port Rane large enough to accommodate the lunatics at Richmond. In his previous answer he explained what was being done there. Port Rane would only accommodate half the lunatics of the district, and accommodation for more than 400 would, therefore, be necessary. If Port Rane were enlarged sufficiently for the requirements of the district they would have to accommodate nearly 2,000, and he believed the works to accommodate 1,000 in contemplation there were estimated to cost £200,000. Against that they had to set the value of the land. They were always told that the value of land in Ireland was questionable. He was not able to say what the value would be, but against the sum mentioned they had to put the value of the site upon which Richmond stood, and no doubt the saving of £60,000 which was going to be spent at Richmond. But this was not a question for the Government. It appeared to be a question for the ratepayers of the district, and he could give no indication of what the views of the Government would be. Although he knew that there was no suggestion that the Government were in anyway responsible for the state of the lunatic asylum at Richmond, he also knew that people who did not exactly know how the land lay in such matters, were apt to think that the Government were responsible for everything. The people primarily responsible for the Richmond Asylum were the governors of the asylums. As far as he knew they had never recommended the abandonment of the Asylum to the proper authorities. The noble Lord knew better than he did who the proper authorities were. The proper authorities in a case of this sort—which involved the acquisition of land and erection of buildings—were the Board of Control. Therefore, although the Government would be most anxious to see better and more economical arrangements made for the accommodation of lunatics, he objected altogether to this being treated in anyway as a matter for which the Government were responsible.

LORD ASHBOURNE reminded the noble Lord that he had not said whether he would be in a position—he would not say to lay on the Table, but to permit inspection of the anticipated Reports of the two inspectors. He felt the force of what the noble Lord had said. The governors were men of the highest position, only anxious to do what was right.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE replied that he would certainly ask whether the Reports would be accessible.

## LAND CLAUSES (TAXATION OF COSTS) BILL.

On the Motion of the LORD CHANCELLOR, this Bill was read a Third Time and passed.

## THE MEANING OF ALTERATIONS IN THE LAW.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY moved—

> "That it be an instruction to the Standing Committee to insert as a schedule in every Bill which refers to any sections of an Act of Parliament for the purpose of amending or repealing them, a reprint of such sections in all cases in which it can be done without an excessive increase in the bulk of the Bill in question."

He said the Motion was intended to correct what was a great evil in our legislation. He was not at all bigoted as to the remedy, if any other than that proposed could be found. But a remedy was required. The practice had grown more and more of referring in a Bill, to other Acts of Parliament by way of modification and amendment, and not mentioning what the effect of that reference might be. The result was, that for a man to sit down to find out what a Bill meant simply from the Bill itself was to undertake a task as hopeless as interpreting an arrow-headed inscription. There was absolutely nothing in the Bill to tell the meaning of the clause in which the reference was made. He had no doubt this was a convenient plan for passing Bills through the House of Commons. The very obscurity which made a Bill perfectly useless to the subject, when passed, made it impenetrable to a Member of the House of Commons when it was passing. He voted for it without thinking, and many Debates and much valuable time were wasted. He understood this policy, but, as it was worked at the present time, it had serious disadvantages. At the present time with the tendency which the State showed to interpose in all the functions and departments of civil life, the more and more Bills had to be dealt with and interpreted by unlearned persons, instead of being reserved for learned persons. Only, for instance, last year, the House passed, after great elaboration and discussion, a Bill for the creation of Parish Councils. These Councils were being administered almost entirely over the vast area of the country by persons entirely unlearned in the matter of Acts of Parliament. It was impossible to understand the meaning of the provisions in a Bill which created Parish Councils without having the 16 volumes of the Statutes at Large at one's elbow. How many people who had to carry that Act into effect in the various parishes had those 16 volumes at their elbow? But this did not end the difficulty. He did not think the Statutes at Large could be bought in small bits. You had to buy the whole series. People whose parishes did not exceed 300 inhabitants might avoid the expense. But in every parish of more than 300 inhabitants a 1d. rate must be levied to purchase the Statutes at Large, so that the Parish Councils Bill might be rudimentarily understood. The noble Lord on the Woolsack was engaged in reforming the local benches of magistrates. He was introducing to them a large number of excellent persons—working men—who were what were called self-made men. Well, the process of self-manufacture did not involve a knowledge of the Statutes at Large, and these unfortunate working men when they administered justice in Petty Sessions would have to find their way through these Statutes as best they could without the possibility of referring to the documents which alone would give them any indication of the meaning of an enactment. He admitted that though the evil was great the remedy was somewhat hard. His own proposal was a simple one—that wherever a section was referred to, for the purpose of modifying it in any way it should be printed in the Schedule. A solitary evil would certainly be increased—not a small one—in the printer's bill, and there would be a certain increase in the bulk of the Statutes at Large. But he did not think that that evil—whatever it might be—in any degree approached the evil of sending out laws to be acted upon by unlearned persons without the very elements of the information by which those laws were to be interpreted. In consequence of the steady trend of modern Legislation this evil was growing year by year, and he earnestly hoped the House would apply some remedy to it. If any other remedy could be devised besides what he had suggested he would be glad to co-operate in it. But the time had come to take some step in that direction.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he entirely sympathised with the object of the noble Marquess (Lord Salisbury). But two matters must be kept distinct in dealing with this question—the want of information by Parliament whilst a Bill was being passed; the other the supply of information to the public after a Bill had passed. As regarded the passage of a Bill through the two Houses all that the noble Marquess desired would be met by a memorandum which should embody the noble Marquess's proposal, that the sections should be set out and the changes made in the law pointed out. This was a note which might be carried out without any serious objection. But the other was a question of greater difficulty. When an Act was passed into law no doubt it was inconvenient that it should be only possible to deal with it and explain it by reference to another Statute. But he thought there was a distinct convenience in having a Bill passed in such a form as to show distinctly the change that was being made. If they were always, when they proposed to alter a section in an Act already law, to re-enact that section with the alterations, he thought the change being made would not so pointedly be called attention to, and those who had been in the habit of dealing with the Act in the past would not so readily perceive what alteration the Legislature had made. Therefore, there was a real advantage when they amended an Act, or section of an Act, in doing it so far by reference as distinctly to point out in the new Act passed the change that was being made. But then, no doubt, that left them in this position—as the noble Marquess had said—that they had to study a variety of other Statutes. He thought that the statement that 16 volumes of Statutes were necessary to explain the Parish Councils Act was the result, to some extent, of a vivid imagination.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But I have counted them.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The revised version embracing the whole of the Statutes would not run into 16 volumes.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I was speaking of the older Statues.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: The revised version embracing all the Statutes would not contain 16 volumes. A limited number only of that edition would need to be procured to understand the Parish Councils Bill. So the expenditure would not be so considerable.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But they are much dearer.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, with reference to the difficulty of understanding legislation by reference he quite agreed that it existed. But he did not himself think the necessity for the change had been rendered greater by any change in the composition of the magisterial bench. He did not think the magistrates of the past had been acquainted with the whole of the Statute Book and able to apply changes without reference and study. Nor was he prepared to admit that they had been more competent in all cases to determine the meaning of a change in legislation than those who had been put on the bench in recent times. But quite apart from that he admitted that it was extemely desirable in some way or other to make a change. He should have thought that probably an improvement might be made by an automatic process of consolidation so that they might always, when a change was made in the law, have the Statute printed up to date with the alterations. But he did not propose to go into any suggestions. What he would invite the House to consider was whether the best mode of improvement would not be to refer the matter (the importance of which he fully appreciated) to a Joint Committee of both Houses. It was important whatever course they determined upon should be agreed to by the other House. In such a matter as this, which simply related to the form of legislation, the two Houses should act on a common agreement. Such an agreement might be arrived at by the appointment of a small Joint Committee of the two Houses—and a Committee existed already with reference to the Consolidation of Bills—and probably a conclusion would be arrived at which would carry out the object the noble Marquess had in view in the best manner after full consideration.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he had no objection to take to the proposal of the noble and learned Lord, xcept that he very much preferred to have a Special Committee for this purpose. If it was merely to be put as a by-matter, to be considered by a Committee which had other and heavier duties to discharge, he felt certain that it would be smothered. The suggestion he made was one which did not enjoy the benevolent appreciation of draftsmen, and he did not feel it would have justice done to it unless a Committee was appointed for the purpose of dealing with it specially and definitely. If the noble and learned Lord would undertake to move for a Joint Committee of the two Houses, he would not press the Motion on the present occasion. In fact, he thought a Committee would be the best form of dealing with the matter; but he rather doubted the possibility of the remedy which the noble and learned Lord suggested — namely, that there should be automatic consolidation at each step. Consolidation was a very different matter from simply referring in an Appendix for the purpose of information to an old Statute. Consolidation involved the weighing again, for legislative purposes, of the words which you use, and often it was really hardly less difficult than a new enactment. If we were to resort to consolidation in the case of every small Bill that was passed, he feared that the burden would be too heavy for those on whom it would fall. This, however, was a matter for a Committee to decide.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had not the slightest objection to the matter being referred to a Special Committee.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he should like to point out to the noble Marquess, with whose object he sympathised, that if his Instruction or Resolution merely referred to clauses which were amended or repealed, he would not do much to diminish the number of volumes that would have to be referred to. Must he not go further and refer also to clauses from other Acts that were embodied in the Bill? This was a point which really involved the vast number of volumes of which the noble Marquess spoke.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion, and would request the noble and learned Lord to undertake to move for the appointment of a Committee.

Motion, by leave, withdawn.

The House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Five o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, 25th March 1895.*

The House met at Three of the clock.

## NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for Third Reading,

Mr. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon) asked whether any special complaint had been made to the Board of Trade relating to the hours of labour of the servants employed by this Railway Company?

[No answer was given.]

*Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentleman object to the Bill being proceeded with?

Mr. CYRIL DODD: No, I am not in a position to object. I do not know whether there is any special complaint. I was merely making inquiry.

## *QUESTIONS.*

## SNAILBEACH QUARTZ MINE ACCIDENT.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the verdict of the jury in the inquest on the bodies of the seven men who were killed, owing to the snapping of the rope of the cage by which they were descending the shaft of the Snailbeach Quartz Mine, Shropshire, on the 6th instant, namely, that the rope had not been properly looked after, and had been used too long; whether he is aware that it was given in evidence that the rope had not been changed for eight years, and had not been repaired; and that John Lee, a mining expert of 30 years' experience, swore the rope was very badly corroded internally, and was not capable of carrying its own weight; and if he can state what steps the Home Office propose to take in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. Asquith, Fife, E.): My attention has been called to the verdict mentioned in the question, and I have received a full report from the Inspector of Mines for the district. The rope had been used for eight and a-half years, and its breaking was due to internal corrosion. The rope had been examined daily, but internal corrosion cannot be detected so long as the outside of the rope remains sound. In the opinion of the Inspector the fault lay in using the rope too long, but he reports that no breach of any particular rule under the Mines Act had taken place. It is extremely difficult to lay down any rule on this subject, but I will take an early opportunity of consulting the Inspectors of Mines as to whether any step can be taken in this direction.

## POST-CARDS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the United Kingdom is the only country within the Postal Union which makes a charge for the material of postcards over and above the price of the stamp impressed; and whether, by way of preparing for the total abolition of such charge, he will recommend that the thin postcards shall be sold at their face or stamp value?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): No, Sir. The United Kingdom compares favourably with other countries of the Postal Union in the price of inland postcards. Holland makes a direct charge for the material, while in France the card costs 10 centimes, and even in Germany 20 cards cost the equivalent of a shilling, as against eleven pence in this country. I cannot recommend that the material of the postcard should be supplied to the public gratuitously. Among other reasons it would be unfair to the private stationer, who at present does a considerable trade in private cards.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has any objection to state the percentage of gross profit on the prime cost of postcards, as delivered by the contractors, which is made by the Department on the sale of such postcards to the public; and the percentage of cost, in relation to the prime cost, incurred by the Department in handling and distributing the postcards to the public, as referred to in the Treasury Minute of 6th August, 1894?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: I am sorry that I cannot give the information asked for. The answer would depend upon figures which are confidential as between the Government and the contractor, and which, as regards cost of distribution and handling, are extremely complicated.

## COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS AT KINSALE.

Dr. COMMINS (Cork Co., S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) whether his attention has been called to the position occupied by the Deputy Collector of Customs for the port of Kinsale, who, in addition to his office as Collector of Customs, holds that of Receiver of Port Dues and Local Rates of the same place, in a suit instituted by the Board of Works against the local authorities of that port and town; (2) whether Kinsale is the only port in the United Kingdom where the Collector or Deputy Collector of Customs is permitted to hold an office not subject to the control of the Customs Authorities nor responsible to them; (3) whether he is aware that complaints have been made by merchants of the port of the manner in which the Deputy Collector has discharged his double functions, imposing (as it is alleged) obstructions to the trade of the port, and calculated to cause vessels having cargo either to discharge or receive, to go to Courtmacsherry, or some other neighbouring port; whether it has been specially alleged that the Deputy Collector has subjected the clearing of vessels to new regulations, and withdrawn from local merchants facilities for such clearing which they have hitherto enjoyed; (4) and whether the Government intends to institute an inquiry as to the grounds of these complaints, and to remove them if they be well founded?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: (1) In reply to the first question, I beg to say the Principal Officer of Customs at Kinsale is Receiver of the Harbour Dues but not of the Town Rates. (2) The answer to the second paragraph of the question is in the negative. (3) In order to enforce the proper payment of the Harbour Dues, in which the Exchequer is directly interested, the officer has been authorised to exercise the powers under Section 48 of the Act 10 Vic., chapter 27, of refusing clearance to vessels until harbour dues have been paid. Similar powers are in force elsewhere, and have not been found injurious, and the Board of Works do not anticipate any loss to the harbour revenue in this instance. I am not aware that complaints have been received from local merchants, nor can I imagine that the restriction could be considered a grievance by any honest trader. (4) If the harbour authorities have any grievance it is open to them to bring it before the Court in the Receiver Suit with a view to having the restriction withdrawn.

## IRELAND AND THE NAVAL PROGRAMME.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty how much of the £28,000,000, which it is estimated will be spent in 1895-6 on the construction of new ships and the Navy generally, will be spent in Ireland?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): I am advised by the Accountant General of the Navy that it is absolutely impossible to specify the amount that will be expended under Naval Votes either in Ireland or any other portion of the United Kingdom during the next financial year. Most of the Naval Votes have no local bearing at all. The principal Vote in which localities might be interested is that which provides for new construction. As I have already said, such firms will have every opportunity of tendering, but until tenders have been accepted it will be impossible to say what proportion even of the Shipbuilding Vote will be expended in Ireland.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Can the hon. Gentleman say how much of this money is to be spent in Scotland? Is he aware that Scotland pays a larger proportion of taxation towards this expenditure than either England or Ireland?

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): How much of this Vote would be expended on the only Government dockyard in Ireland?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I can give the hon. Gentleman a reference to the pages of the Estimates, where the expenditure for Haulbowline is provided for.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Would it be too much to ask the hon. Gentleman to give an undertaking that, wherever money can be spent in Ireland, some share of this Vote would be given?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: There would be every disposition to exercise fair play and equality.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): How much of the New Construction Vote would be spent at Haulbowline?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I am not aware that any new construction is carried out at Haulbowline.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Will the Government, in considering this question, bear in mind that the increased taxation imposed by the Budget of last year fell more heavily on Ireland than on other parts of the country?

[No answer was given.]

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, as the Admiralty are about to add to the number of training ships for the Royal Navy, they will arrange to station one of these ships in Belfast Lough?

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to add to the present number of training ships for the Royal Navy; and, if so, whether he will consider the claims of Belfast to have one of these ships placed in Belfast Lough?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I beg to answer these two questions together. As already stated in the First Lord's Memorandum, it is proposed to station a training ship at Queenstown. No other changes are in contemplation. It is intended that the *Northampton* should visit parts of Ireland, and Belfast Lough would be among them.

## SUPPLY OF PORK TO THE NAVY.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty what is the estimated amount that will be spent on contracts for the supply of pork for the Navy for the ensuing year; and, whether, in distributing those contracts, he will take into consideration the claims of Cork, Waterford and Limerick, and other Irish centres.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The estimated value of the salt pork to be purchased for Naval Service during the ensuing year is about £30,000. Tenders will be called for by advertisement, and the claims of the Irish packers will receive every consideration when placing the contracts.

## STIRLING CATTLE MARKET.

*Mr. M. H. SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture—(1) if he received a representation, dated 31st March 1893, from farmers who sell live stock at the auction market of Messrs. Speedie Brothers, Stirling, complaining of the unreliability of the automatic indicating dial attached to the cattle-weighing machine erected in said mart, in compliance with the Weighing of Cattle Act, 1891; (2) whether, during the last two years, repeated complaints have been forwarded to him regarding the loose way in which cattle are weighed by the proprietors of the auction market; (3) whether he is aware that on 30th January last the local inspector of weights and measures tested the weighing machine and found an error of 56 lbs. against the seller and in favour of the buyer, and gave the proprietors notice of the inaccuracy; and that on the 1st March the inspector again visited the market, and, on finding the machine still incorrect to the extent of 56 lbs. against the seller, he defaced his stamp of verification; and (4), whether, seeing that the incorrect machine is still used for weighing cattle, he will instruct the proper authorities to take proceedings against the owners of this weighing machine?

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Herbert Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I duly received the representation to which the hon. Member refers, and in November last a complaint reached me as to the failure of the machine in question, with regard to which I have been in communication with the auctioneers concerned. I am informed by the Town Clerk that the facts are as stated in the third paragraph of the question, and that the matter will be further investigated by the Burgh Magistrates and Commissioners of Police who are the local authorities for the purposes of the Weights and Measures Acts. I have no power to order proceedings to be taken under those Acts, but I will keep the matter under inquiry so as to prevent, if possible, the recurrence of complaints on the part of those by whom the mart is used.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1894.

**Mr. J. W. CROMBIE** (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether in cases where, as in Aberdeen, a new city parish has, under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, been formed out of the urban portions of several surrounding parishes, any pauper who had a settlement in any of those parishes prior to the change will by the Poor Law Acts now have his claim against the parish council of the rural part of that parish, and not against the new city parish, notwithstanding any order to the contrary made by the Secretary for Scotland under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894; and, whether, if this is the case, he will bring in a Bill to amend the Poor Law Acts in this sense.

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir George O. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): A clause has been inserted in my Orders in the Aberdeen and other cases for the special purpose of obviating the result which the hon. Member deprecates. I see no reason for bringing in a Bill.

**Mr. D. CRAWFORD** (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether a parish council will have power to erect a public hall under Section 24 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894?

***The LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan and Kinross):

*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*

A parish council, outside a burgh or a police burgh, is empowered—

> "To provide or acquire buildings for public offices and for meetings, and for any purposes connected with parish business, or with the powers or duties of the parish council."

These powers are very wide, though not so wide as those originally proposed in the Bill, and approved by this House. In practice, any parish council desiring to exercise them will, doubtless, approach the Local Government Board with a view to obtaining its sanction to the raising of a loan; and it will be for the Board in the first instance to decide whether the particular building proposed is of such a character as to fall within the terms of the Statute.

**Mr. C. B. RENSHAW** (Renfrew, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that in certain parishes in Scotland the number of candidates nominated for the parish or ward is less than the number to be elected for such parish or ward; and whether, in such cases, the returning officer will be entitled to declare the candidates so nominated duly elected, and the Board will order a new election to fill the vacancy or vacancies arising from failure to elect, or whether the nominations so made will have to be disregarded, and an order will be required for a new election of the ward or parish.

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: I am informed that the returning officers have reported to the Local Government Board a few cases in which the number of candidates nominated is less than the number allocated and to be elected. In such cases the returning officer will intimate at the proper time that the persons nominated have been duly elected, and the Local Government Board will thereupon order a new election to fill the vacancy or vacancies, in terms of the 18th Section of the Act of last year.

**Mr. RENSHAW**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that in certain Scotch parishes divided into wards the same person has been nominated as candidate for the parish council in more than one ward; and whether, at the pending election of parish councillors, the person so nominated can withdraw from his nomination to more than one ward; and, if not, on what occasion, in the event of his being returned for more than one ward, he will have to declare for which ward he elects to sit; and, when he has so declared, how the vacancy caused will be filled.

Sir G. O. TREVELYAN: When the same person is nominated for more than one ward he can withdraw during the period allowed for withdrawal, unless the effect of withdrawal would, in the words of the Act—

> "be to reduce the total number of persons nominated below the number necessary to supply the vacancies to be filled."

Where a person is elected for more wards than one, he must signify, at or before the meeting of the provisional parish council, which will be held on Thursday, 11th April, his decision as to the ward which he desires to represent, and the Local Government Board will thereupon duly order a new election to fill the vacancy or vacancies thus arising.

### COWES HARBOUR.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that there is no constituted harbour authority having and exercising adequate legal rights and duties over the important Harbour of Cowes, Isle of Wight, and that the Corporation of Newport legally exercise control over the Medina River as far seawards as "The Folly" public-house, but have no powers over, and have done nothing towards the preservation or improvement of, Cowes Harbour; whether the said Corporation levies tolls in Cowes Harbour; and, if so, under what authority is this done; whether application has been made to the Board of Trade to constitute a local Harbour Authority representative of the places and interests involved; and what steps it is proposed to take with regard to such application?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The Corporation of Newport claim that they have, since the Twelfth Century, under various charters confirmed by successive kings of England, exercised jurisdiction over the Harbour of Cowes, and they state that they have under these charters continuously collected tolls and regulated the anchorage in the harbour, and that for many years past they have appointed the harbour-master there. Application has been made to the Board of Trade by the West Cowes Urban District Council for a Provisional Order under the General Pier and Harbour Acts for the improvement, maintenance, and regulation of Cowes Harbour; but the difficulty is that as under Section 14 of the Piers and Harbours Act of 1861 there is no power to affect any right given or reserved to any persons, by Royal Charter or by prescription, procedure by Provisional Order is not possible. If compulsory powers for the creation of a Harbour Authority are desired, the promoters must proceed by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order.

### COLLECTION OF RATES IN THE HIGHLANDS.

Dr. MACGREGOR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that in some districts of the Highlands the collector of rates neglects to demand payment of the rate before 20th June, which has the effect of disfranchising many of the people otherwise entitled to vote, while after this date such persons are compelled to pay but too late to be put on the register for the current year; and will he consider what remedy he can adopt to prevent the disfranchisement of voters?

Sir G. O. TREVELYAN: The Local Government Board have no knowledge of the existence of any such practise as that referred to; but if the hon. Member will be good enough to furnish the names of any parishes in which the custom obtains, further inquiry will be made.

### CONSOLS.

Mr. W. WHITELAW (Perth): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, where the estate of a person domiciled in Scotland consists partly of Consols, and a title to that estate has been completed by confirmation in Scotland, the confirmation has to be sealed in the English Court of Probate before the Consols can be transferred to the executor; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that Consols are of an Imperial character, and as much Scotch as English, he will consider whether he can introduce legislation dealing with the matter?

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: Investments in Consols and other Government funds forming part of the National Debt of the United Kingdom, being under the management of the Bank of England, are held to be English estate, unless such investments have been made through the National Securities Savings Bank. If the estate of a person domiciled in Scotland consists partly of Consols, the confirmation has, therefore, to be sealed in the English Court of Probate. This is in accordance with the general rule that the authority of the Court of a country in which funds are locally situated is required before the executors can uplift or otherwise deal with them. I do not recollect of having heard this complained of as a grievance, and I doubt whether Parliament would be disposed to deal with it separately.

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called, many times during the last few weeks, to the existence of distress in various parts of South Mayo; whether his denial of the existence of distress in Ballindine, Kilvine, Irishtown, Crossboyne, Ballyhaunis, Aughamore, and Knock is based upon the reports of Mr. Flynn, Local Government Board Inspector; whether he is aware that that Gentleman's method of inspection is to drive through a parish along the main road, and to enter a few houses beside him, as was done in the famine years, 1846–9, and that his reports are literal copies of those issued in that time, in most of which the existence of unusual distress was denied; and whether the Chief Secretary will make further inquiries into the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): A number of representations have been made to me alleging the existence of exceptional distress in various parts of South Mayo. The information supplied to me, and upon which I based my replies to these representations, was not derived alone from the reports of Mr. Flynn, Local Government Board Inspector, but also from the reports received, and conferences with, Mr. Lynch, an Inspector of many years' experience of this district. I am informed that Dr. Flinn's method of inspection is a very thorough one, and is not as alleged in the question; nor are his reports literal copies of those issued in the period referred to. The Local Government Board will keep me informed as to the condition of the people of South Mayo. If the hon. Gentleman is still of opinion that distress exists of such an acute and widespread nature as to require exceptional treatment by the establishment of relief works, and if he will be good enough to furnish the names and addresses of the various families concerned I will at once cause inquiries to be made.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN asked what Mr. Flynn's qualifications for the post were?

Mr. J. MORLEY really did not know, but he examined Mr. Flynn's credentials and satisfied himself that that Gentleman was thoroughly qualified to discharge the duties imposed upon him.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether, in view of the distress in various parts of Ireland, and of strong divergence of opinion between the Local Government Board's Inspectors and the local authorities, he would take some means other than inquiry by the Local Government Board Inspectors to ascertain the extent of distress?

Mr. J. MORLEY could not possibly do that. As Gentlemen from Ireland were aware, whenever they had brought before him any special case he had made special inquiries. He could not consent to supersede the present officers. Of course, it was very natural there should be differences between the Inspectors and the local authorities, because they looked at matters from different points of view.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked if cases in which the local authorities did not at all agree with the Local Government Board's Inspectors had not frequently come under the right hon. Gentleman's notice, and whether it was not more likely that the local authorities were more intimately acquainted with all the circumstances, and better able to give a proper opinion upon the subject than the Local Government Board's Inspectors?

Mr. J. MORLEY was sure the local authorities would give a very good opinion from their own point of view, but the point of view of the Government and of Government officials was necessarily somewhat different to that of the local authorities; they could not take the same view that local authorities naturally took.

Mr. E. F. VESEY KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received a copy of a Resolution unanimously passed by the guardians of the Enniskillen Union, relating to the need of relief works in Gelgeloin and Killinagh, county Cavan; whether he is aware that, owing to the people being landowners, the Guardians cannot effectively relieve this distress; and, whether, having regard to the opposition raised to the Relief of Distress Bill, which proposes to temporarily remove this restriction, he will consider the advisability of preparing to institute relief works in this district?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Resolution referred to has been received. Careful inquiries have been instituted by the Local Government Board into the condition of the poorer classes in the divisions named in the question, and the Inspector's Report appears to show that some of the people are in poor circumstances, and suffered last year from the partial failure of the potato crop. The Union is very well circumstanced, with low poor rates, and there are only 20 persons in receipt of outdoor relief, out of a total population of over 36,000. It therefore appears that the resources of the Poor Law are sufficient to deal with any cases of distress likely to arise in this Union.

Mr. T. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been drawn to the destitution prevailing in Ballincloher and Lixnaw, Lisselton Cross and Ballyegan, and other districts in North Kerry; what has been the result of the recent special inspection by a member of the Local Government Board; and, whether any relief works have been yet proceeded with in North Kerry?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have received several representations alleging the existence of abnormal destitution in the localities mentioned in the question. The condition of the poorer classes in the Listowel Union has recently formed the subject of careful and special investigation by Mr. Bourke, one of the most experienced Inspectors of the Local Government Board, and as a result of his inquiries he is of opinion that no destitution justifying the adoption of exceptional measures of relief at present exists in the Union. In the course of his investigation he conferred with clergymen, Poor Law Guardians, and Relieving Officers, and the general opinion appeared to be that, though there were a number of poor persons in the localities referred to, there was no danger, at present, of anyone suffering from want of food, and that until the Spring work is over, there will be no lack of employment for the people. Under these circumstances, it does not seem to me that any necessity has yet arisen for undertaking relief works in the Listowel Union.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the erection of the pier at Ballyhigue, though sanctioned, had not yet been commenced.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he was not aware, but he would inquire.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN asked whether Mr. Bourke, who also visited North Cork, had made any Report about that district, or any suggestion for relieving the distress there?

Mr. J. MORLEY replied that it was quite true that Mr. Bourke had visited Kanturk Union. The Relieving Officers had assured him that no persons in the Union suffered from want of food, and that they did not expect that people would be reduced to any great straits.

Mr. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that relief work, sanctioned by the Government at Meenaveen, in the parish of Glencolumbkill, county Donegal, was stopped by the action of the local landlords, who object to the construction of a road leading to a limestone quarry at Creeveen; whether, seeing that the opening up of this quarry was earnestly requested by the inhabitants, and would confer a great boon on the Musgrave tenantry, he will order it to be recommenced; is he aware that the local landlords allowed all preparations to be made for the institution of the relief work thus sanctioned by the Government, and gave no notice or intimation of their objection until the work had been actually begun; and, whether, seeing that owing to this action, a large number of heads of families have been kept out of employment for upwards of three weeks, and will be unable to take relief work unless by allowing their small holdings, which now require cultivation, to lie waste for this year, any allowance can be made to the men who have been thus deprived of employment to enable them to crop their holdings?

MR. J. MORLEY: I must ask my hon. Friend to defer this question till to-morrow. Owing to the interruption of telegraphic communication, I have not been able to obtain a Report on it to-day.

## FACTORY INSPECTION IN IRELAND.

MR. T. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has been made aware that the Textile Operative Society of Ireland has declared by Resolution that it is absolutely essential in the interest of the textile workers that at least one female inspector under the Factory Acts should be appointed for Ireland; and, whether the appointment will be made?

MR. ASQUITH: I have not received the Resolution mentioned in the question, but some time ago I received other Resolutions to the same effect. There are now four female inspectors of factories; they are not assigned to any particular locality, but travel to every part of the United Kingdom where their services are required. Notices are exhibited in all factories and workshops in Ireland where women are employed, stating that complaints may be sent to the female inspectors, and all such complaints are promptly inquired into by one of the female inspectors. With the staff and resources which are at present at my disposal, I think that the female inspectors are more usefully employed in peripatetic visits than if they were stationed in particular districts. Special attention has been and is being given by one of them to Irish industries. It is not possible this year, I regret to say, to add to the staff.

MR. W. JOHNSTON asked if one of the ladies had been in the habit of visiting Belfast?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes.

MR. T. SEXTON inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman would specially consider the needs of Belfast to inspection by females in view of the large number of women employed in the textile industry there?

MR. ASQUITH said he was well aware of the peculiar position of Belfast. He quite agreed that that city required supervision by female inspectors, and he would take care there was no neglect in that respect.

CAPTAIN DONELAN asked if any of the four ladies had been selected from Ireland.

MR. ASQUITH: One is an Irish lady by birth.

## MINING EXPLOSIVES.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has decided to utilise the apparatus for testing westphalite, erected at Messrs. Pearson and Knowles' collieries near Wigan, for testing all other safety explosives used in mines; and, whether he is aware that efficient apparatus has been erected by the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers at a cost of about £500, and which has been seen and approved by several members of the Royal Commission on Explosives from Coal-dust; and, if so, whether he will take steps to secure that any experiments now used in mines shall be carried out by gentlemen not connected with the manufacture of explosives.

MR. ASQUITH: I have not decided to cause the apparatus erected at Messrs. Pearson and Knowles' collieries near Wigan for testing other safety explosives in mines to be used for testing westphalite; but if there should be need of it I shall be very willing to accept the loan of suitable apparatus from any quarter. I am aware of the apparatus belonging to the North of England Mining Institute—in fact, some of the Inspectors of Coal Mines have been assisting at these experiments. Until the passing of a Bill dealing with the use of explosives in dangerous mines it will be premature to institute experiments on different sorts of explosives, but I am fully alive to the necessity of impartiality being secured in any experiments that may be made. And I may add I hope very shortly to introduce a Bill.

### INDIAN NATIVE TROOPS.

**Mr. R. W. HANBURY** (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether, in view of the Second Reading of the Army Annual Bill having been put upon the paper for this day, he can state whether it is proposed in it to maintain the punishment of flogging in the case of Indian Native Troops, although it has been abolished in the case of all troops in the British Army, including the black troops of the West India Regiments; and, whether the intervention of the Secretary of State for India, as promised in Committee on this Bill last year, has led to any alteration of the law in that respect.

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. George Russell, North Beds): The Secretary of State for India has been, and is still, in communication with the Government of India on this subject; but no change can take place till a Bill has been passed through the Legislative Council of India.

**Mr. HANBURY** asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was able to give the House any information as to the Government of India having arrived at any decision during the last year. The Secretary of State promised him, now a year ago, he would communicate with India.

**Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL** said, he had answered the question in the terms put into his hands. Perhaps the hon. Member would put another question down.

### CAB-TRADE GRIEVANCES.

**Mr. JOHN AIRD** (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when he will be able to make known his recommendations in reference to the inquiry made by the Departmental Committee about the cab-trade grievances?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I hope shortly to introduce a Bill for the punishment of the offence popularly known as "bilking," in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee. The other recommendations I propose to deal with by Departmental Orders, the scope and terms of which are now under consideration.

### BALLYMAHON DISPENSARY DISTRICT.

**Mr. D. SULLIVAN** (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) is he aware that the medical officer of the Ballymahon Dispensary District entered the National Schools of the said District, and there, during school hours, vaccinated the children, without either the permission of the managers of the schools or the consent of the parents of the children; (2) by what authority, or by whose directions, did he perform this operation, as the Poor Law Guardians of the union, as also the members of the Dispensary Committee, disclaim all responsibility in connection with the matter; (3) is he aware that, when asked for his authority for doing so, the medical officer alleged having received directions from the Local Government Board; and (4) if the medical officer undertook to perform this duty without authority, is he to be paid out of the rates for any number he asserts he has successfully re-vaccinated; and, if so, what check can there be on the account furnished by him to the Poor Law Guardians?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The medical officer states that the pupils of two National Schools in his district, and almost all those in a third school, went to the dispensary to be vaccinated. On visiting the last-mentioned school in order to examine the children who had been vaccinated, the medical officer found that some had not been done, and he vaccinated them in the school. Owing to the anxiety of the people at a reported case of small-pox at a place called Gurteen, the doctor called at the school there and arranged to vaccinate the children, but was refused admission by direction of the manager. At the Convent School the children were vaccinated by arrangement with the Reverend Mother; and the manager, who was present, raised no objection. A medical officer has no authority to compel persons to be vaccinated. As regards the fourth paragraph, a public vaccinator is entitled to be paid for vaccinating all persons who may present himself at his dispensary for the purpose.

### PARCELS FOR THE CAPE.

**Mr. HENNIKER HEATON**: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether he has observed that the Castle Line circulates a printed notice, stating that the Company is prohibited from accepting for shipment any parcel or package of which the size, weight, and value are all within the limits allowed under the Parcel Post Regulations, and that all such parcels must pass through the Post; whether the prohibition in question came from the Post Office, and whether a similar prohibition has been intimated to other Steamship Companies running vessels to the Colonies and to foreign countries; and whether he has advised that such prohibition has a legal character, and is binding upon the shipowners concerned, or that it is void, as being in restraint of trade?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): The notice in question relates to an understanding come to between the Post Office and the Castle and Union Companies in 1885 that, on the commencement of the Parcel Post to and from the Cape, under the contracts of those Companies with the Cape Post Office, they should not carry similar small parcels free of charge. The understanding is not embodied in the contract, and has not the character of a legal prohibition. There is no similar understanding in connection with any of the Imperial contracts for conveyance of Foreign and Colonial parcels.

## NICARAGUA.

COLONEL C. E. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Mr. Gosling has been accorded leave of absence from Her Majesty's Legation to the Republic of Central America; and, in such case, who has been charged to represent him in actively prosecuting the claim of the British Government on the Nicaraguan Republic for the treatment of Her Majesty's Vice Consul?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Mr. Gosling has been granted leave of absence and will leave his post in May. Mr. Roberts, Her Majesty's Consul at Guatemala, will take charge during his absence with the rank of Her Majesty's *Chargé d'affaires.*

*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT asked if the hon. Gentleman knew how long Mr. Roberts had been Consul at Guatemala?

SIR E. GREY could not say.

## TROOPSHIPS.

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty how many troopships have been sold during the last two years; and whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to dispose of the rest of these vessels?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Three of the Indian troopships have been sold by the Indian Government. One of the Indian troopships was bought by the Admiralty, and may be shortly utilised as a powder hulk. None of the Imperial troopships have been sold, two (*Tyne* and *Wye*) are still running. The *Himalaya* will be fitted as a coal-hulk. The *Tamar* is shortly proceeding to Hong Kong to be fitted as a receiving hulk. The *Assistance* may be shortly required as a powder hulk. The *Malabar*, Indian troopship, is still running.

## ARMENIAN PRISONERS.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs how many of the Armenian prisoners, stated to number nearly 3,000, are expected to be affected by the recent decree relating to ecclesiastics; and whether efforts will be made to prevent the recurrence in their case of such incidents as those which occurred last Autumn, when, after the release of about 700 prisoners had been announced and carried out, a large number of them were immediately re-arrested by order of local officials and confined in Turkish gaols?

*MR. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham): Before that question is answered I beg to ask whether the release of the ecclesiastics was not the unsolicited action of the Porte, and whether it is not time that such attempts to impute bad faith to a friendly Power should cease?

*SIR EDWARD GREY: Her Majesty's Government have no reason to suppose that the number of Armenians now in prison is so great as that mentioned by the hon. Member. The statement which has recently appeared in the newspapers was to the effect that between 2,500 and 3,000 persons had been imprisoned, but not that number were still under detention. Her Majesty's Government have no precise information to show how many ecclesiastics will be affected by the Sultan's decision, and this is the answer to the additional question which must be held by Her Majesty's Government to be incompatible with such an intention as is suggested by the latter part of the question.

### BUTTER SUBSTITUTES.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet come to any conclusion as to the introduction of a Bill this Session for remedying the defects of the existing law for the detection of fraudulent substitutes for butter?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am well aware, as my hon. Friend knows, of the great importance of this subject. Since the question addressed to me by my hon. Friend on February 26th, a Select Committee has been appointed, in continuation of the Committee of last Session, to inquire into the working of the Margarine Act, 1887, and the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875, and any Acts amending the same, and to report whether any, and if so what, amendments of the law relating to adulteration are, in their opinion, desirable. Immediately upon receipt of the Committee's Report the question of amending Legislation shall be carefully considered.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman did not consider that the course he proposed to adopt meant the loss of another butter season, and that nothing would be done in the matter for another 12 months.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I regret the delay, but my hon. Friend will see the difficulty in the way of proposing Legislation on a subject which the House has already referred to a Committee.

### FOREIGN FARM PRODUCE.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will take steps to ascertain through the Foreign Office the prices of the leading articles of farm produce and of articles used on the farm in a few places in France, Germany, Austria, and Italy, and publish the results in a Return or in the Official Journal?

*Mr. HERBERT GARDNER: The prices of wheat in Belgium, France, Germany, and the United States, and of live stock and meat in Chicago, Paris, and Brussels, were published in Parliamentary Papers issued last year, copies of which I shall be glad to supply to the hon. Member. We hope also to be able to publish some further information as to the prices of agricultural commodities abroad in the next number of our Official Journal. I attach great importance to the subject, and I shall be happy to bear the suggestion of the hon. Member in mind, and do everything in my power to extend the information available as to the course of prices abroad.

### INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether schoolmasters of certified industrial schools are to be excluded from the benefits of the proposed superannuation scheme for teachers under the Education Department; whether complaint has been made to him by the managers of the Clifton Industrial School that, in consequence of this, they have only obtained two applications for the post of assistant schoolmaster, as compared with 30 or 40 obtained for a similar post in 1891; whether similar complaints have reached him from managers of other industrial schools; and, if so, whether the matter can be reconsidered?

Mr. ASQUITH: The scheme referred to by the right hon. Baronet has merely been recommended by a Departmental Committee, and will require Legislation to carry it into effect. The position of teachers in industrial schools did not fall within the scope of the inquiry. I have received a representation on this subject from the Committee of the Clifton Industrial School, but not from any other managers. The position of schoolmasters in industrial schools will be fully considered by a Committee, which I propose to appoint immediately, to inquire into the management of industrial and reformatory schools.

## BRITISH CONSUL IN SAMOA.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Mr. Cusack-Smith, British Consul in Samoa, is now *en route* for England; when Mr. Cusack-Smith may be expected to arrive; and whether his resumption of duty as British Consul in Samoa is contemplated?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Mr. Cusack-Smith is in England, being entitled to a leave of absence of some months. A competent officer has been sent from Fiji to replace him.

## AFFAIRS IN SAMOA.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the correctness or otherwise of the late Robert Louis Stevenson's allegations that Captain Bickford promised Mataafa safety and the protection of the British flag, and that this promise was violated by the transfer of Mataafa from the Katoomba to a German war vessel, which bore him away to exile in the Marshall Islands; whether the British, German, and American Consuls were unanimous in their decision to deport Mataafa to the Marshall Islands; whether Mataafa is permitted to receive letters from friends and sympathisers, and what is the nature of the strict control exercised over his communications with the outer world; and whether he can give any detailed information with respect to the full facilities that are said to be allowed Mataafa for the exercise of his religion?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Mataafa surrendered to the three Treaty Powers under a promise that his life should be safe. This promise has been kept, and there is no need to inquire whether it was given to him by Captain Bickford personally or not. The three Consuls acted together under instructions from their respective Governments. The control over Mataafa is exercised by the German authorities, to whom he has been entrusted, and by whom he is being humanely and considerately treated. In February, 1894, the German Government stated that they did not entertain any fears that Mataafa would not be sufficiently provided with means for exercising the Roman Catholic religion. A considerable number of European Catholics reside in the Marshall Islands, who know the Samoan language, and in whose services Mataafa could take part. Roman Catholic priests from the Caroline Islands also visit the Marshall Islands, and a German Roman Catholic teacher was expected shortly, and it would be his special duty to take charge of Mataafa's spiritual welfare. The German Governor at Jaluit, Marshall Islands, reported, a few months ago, that Mataafa has a service for his Samoans, besides Sunday celebrations, early every morning and evening, in the small Catholic Church which has been acquired from the Catholic Mission.

## MANCHESTER POSTMEN.

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will inquire why the Postmaster of Manchester is unable to reply to a respectful Memorial addressed to him by the postmen of that city with reference to certain grievances which they allege to exist; and whether he will state whether he can now see his way to provide that postmen's duties shall be eight hours within a maximum of 12 hours?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: The postmaster of Manchester reports that he has received the Memorial referred to and that it is still under consideration, and will be replied to as soon as sufficient time has been given for the examination of and decision upon the ten distinct applications which it contained. As regards the limitation of postmen's attendances to a period of 12 hours, I may state that this is now the general rule of the Service, wherever it can be effected without actual waste of force or undue expense. In some instances, however, the men have themselves preferred an arrangement which gave them a longer interval of rest between their duties, although extending them over a longer period. At Manchester, it is hoped, under a revision which is now in progress, to bring a large number of additional duties within the covering period of 12 hours; and it will be arranged that in each duty which is still excluded there shall be a long interval for rest.

## THE SWINE FEVER ORDER.

DR. M'DONNELL (Queen's County, Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been directed to a Resolution passed by the Marlborough Town Commissioners in reference to the hardships entailed both on buyers and sellers by the recent Order in Council concerning swine fever; and whether, having regard to the state of facts disclosed by the Resolution, steps will be taken to lessen the stringency of the operation of the said Order?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed by the Veterinary Department that in consequence of the prevalence of swine fever in the Mountmellick Union, which comprises the town of Maryborough, the Union was brought under the operation of the recent Order in Council. The number of outbreaks of swine fever in the Union in the year 1894 was 120, and in the present year, 18 outbreaks have so far been reported. The provisions of the Order will be relaxed in regard to this Union so soon as this can be properly done.

## LONDON MUNICIPALITIES BILL.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division, whether it is his intention to proceed with the London Municipalities Bill?

SIR F. D. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the right hon. Baronet, I wish to say that as a private Member I could only have hoped to get the principle of London divided into Municipalities, as contained in my Bill, affirmed, which, whilst preserving one central Council for matters of really common concern, would confer upon local areas full municipal rights the liberty of conducting their own local affairs. As the Government had given notice in the Queen's Speech to bring in a Bill in a contrary direction, I had considered it right to give the House an opportunity of having before it an alternative scheme, but as the principle embodied in my Bill, which is ready after some weeks of labour, has so recently been clearly approved by the electors of London themselves, it seemed to me idle to take up the time of a dying Parliament in re-affirming a question in which London itself has spoken with no uncertain sound, and I shall, therefore, not proceed with my Bill.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: Will the hon. Member move, on Wednesday, that the Order be discharged?

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND: Yes, I will.

## GOVERNMENT BILLS.

*SIR C. W. DILKE: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the expediency of an early reference to a Standing Committee of the Bills of the Home Secretary on Factories and on Truck, he can promise that the Second Reading of these Bills shall be proposed before Easter?

MR. D. A THOMAS asked whether the Coal Mines Amendment Bill would also be taken before Easter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, Derby): I am not in a position to make any promise in reference to the Coal Mines Amendment Bill. As to the Bills referred to in the question of my right hon. Friend, I am not able to make any promise, but we hope to be able to take the Second Reading of the Bills before Easter and to refer them both to a Grand Committee.

## FEUDATORY NATIVE STATE IN INDIA.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Section 20 of the Finance Act, 1894, already applies to British India and the Feudatory Native States to which British Political Officers are appointed; and, if not, whether steps will be taken with a view to the issue of the necessary Order in Council.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Section 20 of the Finance Act, 1894, has been applied to British India by Order in Council dated February 2, 1895. The Order in Council does not extend the Section to any part of India where the law of British India does not apply, and therefore it does not extend it to any Feudatory Native States.

## SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE: COMPENSATION.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, when a veterinary inspector orders a cow to be slaughtered as suffering from pleuro-pneumonia, and a post-mortem examination shows the animal not to be diseased, the owner is compensated to the full value of the cow; and when a veterinary inspector orders a horse to be slaughtered as glandered, and a post-mortem shows that it is not glandered, has the owner a claim for the full value of the horse?

*Mr. HERBERT GARDNER: A veterinary inspector has no power to order slaughter either in pleuro-pneumonia or glanders. In pleuro-pneumonia, the power to slaughter rests absolutely with the Board of Agriculture, the compensation paid where the animal is not diseased being its value immediately before it was slaughtered. In glanders, the power to slaughter rests with the Local Authority. If disease be only suspected the consent of the owner is requisite, and if the animal is declared to be diseased the owner has a right of appeal to the Board of Agriculture before it is slaughtered. The compensation paid where the horse slaughtered is diseased must be not less than £2 and not more than one-fourth of its value before it became diseased. In every other case the value of the animal before it was slaughtered is payable.

Mr. T. H. BOLTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman not see that there is an inconsistency in the practice followed in these two cases, and will he consider the propriety of adopting rules providing that the cases should be treated in the same way?

*Mr. H. GARDNER: I think my hon. Friend is trying to draw an analogy between cases that are not analogous.

## AFFAIRS IN CHITRAL.

Mr. G. N. CURZON (Southport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether he can give the House any further information upon the state of affairs in Chitral; whether the British Agent is still invested in the Chitral fort, and, if so, what steps are being taken for his support or relief; whether the Indian Government have recognised a Mehtar of Chitral; and whether any further information is forthcoming as to the attitude of Umra Khan?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: Beyond the information given to the House on the 21st instant in reply to the hon. Member for Banffshire (Sir W. Wedderburn) and a report identical with that which appeared in the newspapers about the melancholy loss of Captain Ross and his party near Buni, the Secretary of State has no information. It is believed that the British Agent, with 300 men, is still invested in the Chitral fort, and the Government of India have reported that the Chitral relief force will be despatched as soon as it can be made ready, by the 1st April if possible. So far as the Secretary of State is aware, the Government of India have not recognised anyone as the new Mehtar of Chitral. It is not known where Umra Khan is for certain, but he is supposed to be still in Chitral territory. Some of his men are reported by Lieutenant Jones to be holding the Fort of Drasan to the North of Chitral. No information has been received from Dr. Robertson direct, of later date than 1st March.

## SCHOOL ACCOUNTS AND REGISTERS.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education—(1) whether Mr. J. H. Levy, a a clerk of the First Class in the Education Department, has been appointed Examiner of School Accounts and Registers, with an addition to his salary of £100 per annum; (2) whether the duties of the new post are of a different character from those hitherto discharged by Mr. Levy in his capacity as a First Class Clerk; and (3) upon what grounds it has been thought right to select him for a position of greater dignity and emolument in preference to colleagues of longer service and experience?

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): The answer to the first paragraph of the question is in the affirmative. The duties of the new post are of a more extended and important character than those hitherto discharged by Mr. Levy. He was selected for the position on the ground of his special acquaintance with the kind of work which it will involve.

Mr. LEGH: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether or not Mr. Levy is a very energetic member of the National Liberal Club, and also whether on a recent occasion he did not take a prominent part in the organisation of the festivities at which the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer met in social intercourse?

Mr. ACLAND: I am not aware. If the hon. Member means to say that I made this appointment on the ground of politics he is wrong. It was strongly pressed upon me by the Head of the Department.

Mr. LEGH: I will call attention to the matter on the Vote in the Estimates.

### THE TELEPHONE SERVICE COMMITTEE.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the nature of the proposals contained in the agreements with the Telephone Companies, and the effect of those proposals, would be placed before the Select Committee on Telephone Service?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I understand the agreement in question and its effect is already before the Committee.

### INTERIM REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE UNEMPLOYED.

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can see his way to afford the House an opportunity for considering the Interim Report of the Select Committee on the Unemployed Question?

Sir W. HARCOURT replied that his means of finding an opportunity for such a discussion were not large, but if he could he would gladly do so.

### LAND TAX.

Mr. R. W. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the Land Tax chargeable upon a parish is a definite quota, the amount of which is modified only by the redemption of the tax from time to time; (2) whether he is aware that the warrant issued to assessors itself states that the law does not authorise the raising of a greater sum for Land Tax within any place than that remaining unexonerated and payable for such place, naming the actual sum or quota in each parish; (3) if he could explain why, and under what authority, a sum considerably in excess of such quota is frequently levied, especially in small parishes, and what is the limitation, if any, placed upon the possible amount of such overcharge; and (4) whether the whole or a large portion of the surplus Land Tax thus levied is legally payable, with the consent of the Inland Revenue Board, to the assessor whose assessment may have produced the overcharge and consequent surplus as a remuneration of his services?

Sir W. HARCOURT: The facts are correctly stated in the first and second paragraphs, except that the warrant to assessors contains an instruction that the assessment is to be such as to "produce as nearly as possible the amount remaining unexonerated and payable." In answer to the third paragraph, it is often impossible to raise the exact quota—neither more nor less—by an equal pound rate on all the unexonerated properties in a parish, and, as nothing less than the quota may be raised, the yield of the assessment is often in excess of it. The assessment is in the hands of the District Commissioners of Land Tax, and I am not aware of any limitation on their authority beyond the provision that they are to raise "as nearly as possible the exact quota. With regard to paragraph 4, the law does not provide for any direct remuneration being given for assessing Land Tax, but it has vested in the District Commissioners of Land Tax (with the approval of the Board of Inland Revenue) the power of paying over to assessors such an amount of surplus as shall fairly remunerate them for their work. Any surplus beyond that amount goes towards the redemption of the parish quota.

### MR. JABEZ BALFOUR.

Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I would like to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to give the House any further information concerning the prospects of the extradition of Mr. Jabez Balfour. The Under Secretary will recollect that when I last brought this matter before the House he expressed a wish to give this information as soon as he had received it?

Sir EDWARD GREY: I was not aware the hon. Gentleman was going to ask a question on this subject. If he will give me notice I will get all the information that I can.

Mr. DARLING: I did not give notice because I understood that the hon. Baronet said he desired to give an answer on the subject as soon as ever he obtained the information. I merely gave him the opportunity.

Sir E. GREY: I will only just say that I could take advantage of the opportunity much better, more completely, and with greater satisfaction to everybody if I was given notice of the question.

### BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA.

Mr. R. W. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War at what time since the 31st January of the present year, on which date, according to the report of the Controller and Auditor General, no agreement had been arrived, it was agreed between the War Office and the India Office to charge the sum of £7 10s. per man for the home effective charges on account of British troops in India; for what period such agreement was made; whether it was in writing; and, whether he will lay the agreement upon the Table?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The arrangement whereby £7 10s. per head of the Indian Establishment is paid by India on account of home effective charges has subsisted for some years, and has been renewed year by year by common consent pending a more precise settlement. It was so renewed for the present year on the 19th of February last by a letter from the India Office.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what day the Vote on Account would be taken, and when it was expected that the Second Reading of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill would be completed?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I was just going to make a statement to the House on the subject. I have reason to hope that the Debate on the Welsh Bill may be closed to-morrow night, and for that purpose I shall give notice of the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule to-morrow. With reference to the Vote on Account, it must be taken on Thursday night. It is necessary to have the Report on the Vote on Friday in order to get the necessary financial authority before the close of the financial year. I shall propose to give those two days to the Vote on Account and the Report.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH remarked that the could nospeak with authority in the absence of the Leader of the Opposition. He might say, however, that he had carefully watched the Debate; he had seen a great desire on both sides to address the House; the issues were very important, and had been largely widened by the speeches of the Home Secretary and other hon. Members, and he did not think it possible fairly to conclude the Debate to-morrow night.

Sir W. HARCOURT said, he had the greatest desire to consult the convenience of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had communicated with the Leader of the Opposition, but as he had received no reply he supposed the right hon. Gentleman was out of town. He had reason to believe that there was a general desire that the Debate should conclude to-morrow night. He should be very glad to communicate with hon. Gentlemen opposite on the subject, and perhaps later on they would be able to give him an answer.

Mr. E. F. VESEY KNOX asked when the Irish Land Bill would be taken.

Sir W. HARCOURT replied that that would depend upon the answer to the question when the Debate on the Welsh Bill was to terminate.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the Land Bill come before the Local Veto Bill or after it?

Sir W. HARCOURT: That, again, will depend upon the answer to the question I have already indicated.

### MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL AND MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION (No. 2) BILL.

Leave given to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c., to make a Special Report. Special Report brought up, and read. Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill reported. Market Gardeners' Compensation (No. 2) Bill reported, without Amendment.

Special Report and other Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

[No. 185.] Minute of Proceeding to be printed. [No. 185.] Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill, as amended in the Standing Committee, to be taken into consideration upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 179.]

### NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Sir William Henry Wills, baronet, for the Borough of Bristol (East Division).

### REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (CHANNEL ISLANDS CHILDREN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill for enabling Children to be sent from the Channel Islands to Reformatory or Industrial Schools in Great Britain.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 180.]

### SUPREME COURT (OFFICERS) BILL.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. Asquith, Fife, E.), in asking for leave to introduce a Bill to amend certain provisions of the law with respect to officers of the Supreme Court, explained that this was a simple and non-contentious Measure. Its first object was to do away with the necessity for making unnecessary appointments in the Court; the next to bring the servants of the Courts within the same provisions as to retirement as the rest of the Civil Service; and the final object was to abolish the office of Queen's Remembrancer, which had become obsolete.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 181].

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to question, 21st March, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—And which Amendment was to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—*(Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.)*

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now,' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*Sir G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, that when the Debate broke off last week he was endeavouring ta explain why he could not agree with those who contended that the Reformation had effected no organic change in the Church of England. If a change in constitution, in ritual, in doctrine was not an organic change, it was difficult to see what was meant by those words. No doubt there was before the Reformation, an Anglican Church as there was a Gallican Church and a Hungarian Church, and, in a certain sense, the present Church of England was a continuation of that Church, but only in the sense that the present House of Commons was a continuation of the Saxon Witenagemote. Would anyone deny that before the Reformation the Pope not only claimed, but exercised, jurisdiction over the Anglican Church? If he did, let him read the story of Thomas a'Becket, or, better still, the famous letter of Henry VIII. to Leo X. denouncing the Protestant heresies of Luther, which earned for him the title, still enjoyed by the Queen, of Defender of the Faith, and which recognised to the full the Papal supremacy in spiritual matters. No doubt a change came over the theological views of the King. There was "a lady in the case," and the result of his conversion or apostasy was a series of legislative enactments, interrupted by the short interlude of Mary's reign, which culminated in the two famous Statutes of Elizabeth, which might be called the Deed of Settlement of the English Church. Those Statutes Disestablished and Disendowed the pre-Reformation Church and handed over all its revenues to the post-Reformation Church—at least, if they did not Disestablish and Disendow the Church, they Disestablished and Disendowed every Bishop of that Church except one—Anthony, Bishop of Llandaff—for they were all deprived of their sees as a consequence of the passing of those two Statutes. Coming to the Bill itself, the discussion of its details would be more conveniently deferred to a later stage, including the allocation of the revenues of the Church. But he might say that where those revenues had a local origin, it seemed only just that they should be applied for the benefit of the localities from which they were derived. [A voice: "No."] A good deal had been said about the injustice inflicted upon curates. But they remembered the scandals to which compensation given to Irish curates had led. He held in his hand an advertisement in the *Belfast Advertiser* of December 28, 1870, which was as follows:—

> "Curates wanted — wanted immediately. Annuities almost certain. Apply by letter on Wednesday, December 28, or Thursday, December 29, 1870, or by telegraph."

Why by telegraph? Because the Bill became law on the Monday following. The result was, that the compensation paid to Irish curates, estimated at £800,000, was swelled to £1,800,000. He might mention, too, that curates in Wales were chiefly employed in populous districts, where the Church was now practically unendowed, and where the Bill would make little or no change in their prospects. He had listened to almost every speech made during the Debate, and it seemed to him that the objections to the measure resolved themselves into five, which he would proceed to consider *seriatim*; for he thought that the suggestion that the movement had been prompted by cupidity and greed was one which they could afford to treat with a silence which was the best answer to such unworthy insinuations. The first objection to the Bill was that the maintenance of the Establishment in Wales was necessary to the maintenance of the Establishment in England, and that, if the one fell, the other must fall with it. That was an argument which bulked largely in the innumerable petitions presented against the Bill. For the "drum ecclesiastic" had been beaten in every parish. The Measure had been preached against, prayed against, petitioned against by men and women, by boys and girls, who knew about as much of the inhabitants of Wales, as they did of the inhabitants of Jupiter and Saturn. Stripped of all disguise, what did this argument come to? It came to this—

> "We in England don't want Disestablishment; therefore, you in Wales are not to have it, whether you want it or not."

Was there ever a more monstrous contention? But then they were told that they were only four dioceses of the Province of Canterbury, that Wales was an integral part of England, an appanage of England, a "parish" of England, and no more entitled to distinctive treatment than Yorkshire or Kent. It was rather late in the day, after Wales had been so often dealt with by Parliament as a separate country, to raise that objection. Yet it was the whole gist of the best speech against the Bill which he had yet read. That speech was the speech of a lady, Lady F. Cavendish. Far be it from him to say a disrespectful word of one who bore that honoured name; but, when Lady Cavendish said she was "a Home Ruler, but not a Heptarchist," he could not help remembering that Wales never formed part of the Heptarchy, and that their Celtic nationality was centuries older than her Saxon Heptarchy. If they had not been strong enough to retain their own laws, they had been patriotic enough to retain their own language, their own literature, and their own national traditions and aspirations. An hon. Member had said that there were in Wales several hundred thousand persons who spoke English only. But what of that? A Welshman did not cease to be a Welshman because he learnt to speak English, any more than it could be said that Mr. Parnell was not an Irishman because he did not speak Erse. This, at least, he could say, that there were far more persons in the Principality who spoke Welsh now than did so when he was a boy. And now he was approaching a somewhat delicate subject. He could not forget the storm which he had once drawn down upon his head by saying in that House that Scotchmen were less national than Welshmen because they had not a distinct language, but only a distinct brogue. But, if his Scotch and Irish friends would forgive him, he would say this, of all the four nationalities into which this Kingdom was popularly divided, the most distinctive—certainly the most compact—was the nationality of Wales. She had no Ulster, like Ireland; no division of Highlands and Lowlands, like Scotland. Indeed, if ever there was a people who, by right of race, by right of language, by right of national character were entitled to be called a nation, that people was the population of Wales. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite not see what an enormous injury they were doing to their cause in the Principality by pressing that argument to its legitimate conclusion? It enabled their opponents to say, as they did say, that the whole support of the Welsh Church came from without and not from within. For how, and by whom, was the work of the Church defence in Wales maintained? Mainly by Englishmen and with English money. Why, they could not even get a Church Defence candidate to stand unless his expenses were guaranteed by the "Grosvenor House Fund." During the last few days he had witnessed a spectacle absolutely unique in his long experience of the House of Commons. When the Speaker looked to the right he saw at least a dozen Welsh Members eager to catch his eye. When he looked to the left he could not single out one solitary man who was representative of the Principality in any sense whatever. To be sure, such men were not largely represented on the opposite Benches. Out of the 300 Conservatives there were but three Welsh Members. But where were the three? He felt inclined to cry out with Byron in his famous poem—

> "Of the three hundred grant but three
> To make a new Thermopylæ!"

Talk about the nakedness of the land. What would have been said if on the Irish Church Bill or the Irish Home Rule Bill not a single Irishman had been found to raise his voice against the measures? There was the great Albert Hall meeting, conspicuous for the absence of elected Welsh Members and for the presence of rejected Welsh candidates. Then there was the recent meeting at the Queen's Hall, where they could not even get a rejected Welsh candidate, though, Heaven knows, there were plenty of them. They did, indeed, get a gentleman, a Mr. Permewan, who said he had lived in Wales when he was a baby, but they had to fish him out from the farthest recesses of Cornwall. Now, did not all this prove what he had been much abused for saying—that the Establishment in Wales was defended, not by native levies, but by foreign auxiliaries? He now came to the second, or what he might call the historical, argument against the Bill. It was said that the Welsh Church was the elder sister of the Church of England, and that she existed long before St. Augustine landed upon these shores. Well, that was true enough; though it must be confessed that the traditional position of the sisters was reversed, and that in this case the Ecclesiastical Cinderella was the Welsh and not the English Church. But it was equally true that until Wales was overpowered by her stronger neighbour, the two Churches were not only distinct, but hostile. He had once heard a most interesting lecture from his learned Friend—learned in every sense of the word—Mr. Justice Vaughan Williams, on the old Welsh Church, from which it would appear that the origin, ceremonials, and doctrines of the two Churches were entirely different. Indeed, it would appear from other accounts that they led a sort of cat and dog life, and that the Archbishop of Canterbury was occasionally in the habit of excommunicating his Cambrian brethren. But, after all, this was rather a matter of academical interest, for the questions which, as practical men, they had now to consider were not the relations of the Welsh Church to the English Church 500 years ago, but the relations of the English Church to the Welsh people at the present time. But then it was said that they were "estopped" from going into those relations at all until they had taken what was called a "religious census." You might as well say that you were estopped from saying that it was hot or cold until you had looked at a thermometer. But did anyone who knew Wales, who knew how in that country the power of the purse and the power of exercising social pressure in such matters lay with the class which owned five-sixths of the land and at least four-fifths of the wealth of the country, really believe that such a census (if taken) would be worth the paper on which it was printed? Besides, a religious census would not tell you what you wanted to know, which was, not the proportion of Welsh Churchmen to Welsh Nonconformists, but the proportion of Welshmen who favoured Disestablishment and of those who opposed it. And for that purpose what better census could you have than the ballot-box? And what answer did the ballot-box give you? Thirty-one out of 34 Members returned to support the Bill by an average majority of 2,000. Such a majority was absolutely without parallel in Parliamentary annals. The Bishop of St. Asaph's figures had been literally riddled by the Member for Mid Glamorganshire (Mr. S. T. Evans). He had shown that the Bishop had claimed for his side 17,328 votes given for Unionist candidates who declared themselves in favour of Welsh Disestablishment. He might have added that one of the candidates whose votes he claimed (Sir R. Cunliffe) actually took the chair at an annual meeting of the Liberation Society, and made one of the most effective speeches ever delivered against the Welsh Establishment. Besides, the Bishop counted every man on the Register as a potential voter, whereas it was well known that, as a rule, owing to deaths, removals, and other causes, not more than 75 per cent. of the electors registered in the constituency actually went to the poll. With these corrections it would appear from the Bishop's own figures that the majority of voters who favoured Disestablishment, instead of being five to three, was more like four to one. So much for the Bishop's figures, which he had repeated in *The Times* that morning, without taking the slightest notice of the Member for Mid Glamorganshire's corrections. But it was said that the Bill would be hurtful and even fatal to the cause, not only of the Church, but of religion itself. Here, happily, they had some experience to guide them. It was common ground to them all that in the last century the Church of England had a free hand in Wales. This was what he meant when he had said, some twenty-five years ago, that "Dissent in Wales was a modern growth." The Member for West Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach), had charged him with saying it was "a plant of foreign growth." He had never said anything so foolish. But then the right hon. Baronet had been courteous enough to add that he "laid no stress on anything which he—" (Sir G. O. Morgan)—"said." He could only express his surprise that the right hon. Gentleman should have wasted any part of his precious time in quoting the opinions of so unimportant an individual as himself, especially when those opinions were expressed a quarter of a century ago. But it was agreed on all hands that up to the end of the last century the Church was almost the only spiritual power in Wales. And what was the result? Under her fostering care Wales was rapidly becoming a heathen land; when the fathers of Welsh Nonconformity—men whose names were still enshrined in the hearts of their countrymen—stepped into the breach. They were persecuted, hunted down, imprisoned. They had to preach in barns, by the roadside, on the mountain top. But they left their mark upon the men and women among whom they laboured. They made this nation of heathens the most religious and the most law-abiding people in the whole world. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Let them point to a country where the places of worship and Sunday schools were so full, where the gaols were so empty, where education was so highly prized, where the amusements of the people, according to Montesquieu the best test of national progress and character, were so pure, so refined, and so elevating. Why, if you looked at the judicial statistics, you would find that England was, in proportion to her population, twice as criminal as Wales. Here were the results of the last Summer Assizes in six counties of North Wales: Three maiden assizes, one in which no true bill was found, one in which a prisoner was found guilty and ordered to come up for judgment when called upon, and one in which two prisoners were convicted—so that six counties gave two convicts. And yet it was said that in this, the most religious country in the world, Christianity would die down like a withered plant unless, among other things, four Bishops were paid £17,000 a year for keeping it alive. The fifth and last argument was that the Church had made such progress of late that it would be a culpable, indeed, a criminal, act to do anything which would interfere with that progress. But if the Church had made progress, and he was very glad to think it had, the Nonconformists, whose three principal bodies had in the last 20 years increased their Communicants by 46 per cent., had made even greater progress. Moreover, the progress of the Church had taken place in those populous districts where she was practically unendowed at present, such as Glamorganshire, which, with a population of 600,000 inhabitants, could only boast of Endowments amounting to

*Sir G. Osborne Morgan.*

£13,000 a year, or 4½d. for each inhabitant. And surely it was most illogical to vote against this Bill because it would compel the Church to rely everywhere on those voluntary efforts by which alone she was at present holding her own. But one thing was certain. If the Church had made progress, the Disestablishment movement had made greater progress. Twenty-five years ago seven Welsh Members voted for Mr. Watkin Williams's Resolution, and 13 against. The seven had grown to 31—the 13 had dwindled down to three. Indeed, for one Welsh Churchman who was in favour of Disestablishment 25 years ago, at least 20 advocated it now. The Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) had twitted him with the small number of Welsh clergymen who supported what was known as the "Bangor Disestablishment Scheme," but in such a case *Ponderantur non numerantur sententiœ*, and these men had been truly described by their own Diocesan as "all first-class men." And what did these first-class men say? That the situation was intolerable, that the Established Church of England was not the National Church of Wales, that—

> "The present disastrous conflict was destroying their national unity and impairing their spiritual life."

Did they hope by prolonging that "disastrous conflict" to bring back the erring sheep to the fold? When he addressed the House on the First Reading of the Bill he had warned his opponents that every year would make their chances of a satisfactory settlement worse and worse. To-day he desired to take higher ground. No one who had impartially studied the question could believe that the Church Defence Institution could arrest this movement any more than the Danish King could stay the rising of the tide. No doubt they could raise still higher "the barrier laid across their national life, which," in the eloquent words of Canon Fremantle, "now prevented the co-operation of good men in a common cause." They could embitter still further the relations between Nonconformists and clergy in Wales; they could make the Church itself the narrowest and straitest of sects. But the movement itself they could not kill, because it was born, not of cupidity and greed, not of envy, hatred, and uncharitableness, but of that love of freedom and justice which was the hardy growth of their mountain soil—because it owed its vitality and its strength to that craving for a higher, and a fuller, and a purer religious life, which was one of the happiest omens of our age, but which was nowhere to be seen in such fulness and in such intensity as in the land which, in the most popular of their national songs, they still loved to call "The Old Land of their Fathers."

*Sir EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth): I have listened with much interest and with great respect to the speech which has just been delivered. The right hon. Baronet is a Welshman of high cultivation; he is the chairman of the Welsh Party in this House. I believe that within the last five years he has made an attempt to acquire the Welsh language.

*Sir G. O. MORGAN: I acquired my knowledge of the Welsh tongue many years before the hon. and learned Member was born.

*Sir E. CLARKE: I think I ought to have said that, by later tuition, he has endeavoured to improve those early studies. I gather, however, from documentary evidence, that the right hon. Gentleman has taught history to the Prime Minister and that he has given statistics to the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary has dismissed the history of the Prime Minister, and I hope before I finish to show that the statistics of the Home Secretary are as bad as the Prime Minister's history. If I should reach that judicial position which the right hon. Gentleman thinks I am fitted to occupy, I do not doubt that I shall, if I have the opportunity, and in a pleasant season of the year, take one of the Welsh circuits, if crime is very scarce there. I join with the right hon. Baronet in rejoicing at the scarcity of crime in Wales. I did not hear from him, however, that it was a very recent condition, say, dating from 50 years ago. I think the truth is, that the Welsh people for the past two or three centuries have been law-abiding and respectable; and I attribute the character of the Welsh people, upon which the right hon. Gentleman plumes himself, to the influence of that Established Church, whose influence we do not desire to withdraw from its effect on the Welsh character. But we are here dealing with large issues. We are called upon to disestablish and disendow an integral portion of the Church of England. I know that some few of those who were most closely associated with the work of the Church of England had, from time to time, spoken of Disestablishment as if it were a matter of no great concern. I attach a much greater importance to Disestablishment than to Disendowment. There has been much said, in the course of this Debate, with regard to the burdens which fell upon the Church of England by reason of its condition as an Established Church. It is said that the Established Church is limited in its action, that it is controlled by the State, that the headship of the Crown produces certain incidents, in the appointment of Bishops and other matters, which are not matters upon which the Church can congratulate itself. It has been put higher still by Members on the other side of the House, and, indeed, I understood the Home Secretary to say that Parliament had a right to decide and to regulate the doctrines of the Church of England. I absolutely repudiate that pretension. Parliament can no more alter the doctrines of the Church than it can alter the laws of gravitation. It has no more right or power to affect those doctrines than it has a claim to regulate my opinion on a matter of conscience. We should long ago have altered many incidents that attend the relationship of the Church and the State if Parliament had been willing to deal with the Church of England in a sympathetic and kindly spirit, and if we had not had to meet here the rank hostility of those who again and again have endeavoured to prevent the Church of England from reforming its laws and regulating the lives of its clergy, because they preferred to keep the difficulties and the scandals alive in order that they might more easily attack the institution of the Church. It is true that there are burdens from some of which we should have gladly freed ourselves, but those burdens fall lightly on the Church in comparison with that privilege which the Church alone has of being recognised as the universal teacher of the Gospel which it is her mission to proclaim. So long as the Church of England is Established, nobody is without the right to religious ceremonies and religious instruction, and the difference between a country in which there is no Established Church and the place in which happily this Church is established with its authority and its correlative duties is, that in the former you have a number of somewhat narrow sects competing with each other for the influence and revenue they may gain from the community, while in the latter, on every seventh day, at least, the Church doors are opened to all, and the poor man, though his poverty can bring no gift, is entitled to enter and to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and receive the administration of the sacraments. It is his right, and none can bar him from it. But, suppose the Church to be Disestablished, there will be in the parish the old building, it may be with a more ornate service, and a more splendid adornment than it had before; but it will not be his Church. It may be a Church provided for him by the bounty and generosity of people at a distance, who choose to offer him the means of grace, but he would not have the right to sit within its walls or to share in its ministrations. There is a curious provision in this Bill, the meaning of which I have desired to ascertain. It says that when the Churches are handed over to the representative body—

> "every Church, parsonage house, burial ground, and glebe vested under this section shall be held subject to all existing public and private rights in respect thereto."

There is no such provision in the Irish Act. Does it mean what it says—that public rights are to remain, that every parishioner is to have the right in that parish church to listen to the teaching of the Word, and to share in the administration of the Sacraments? I do not think it does. It cannot mean that. If it means that, this Bill would not Disestablish the Church, but re-establish it, and be a recognition of its buildings as places into which the people of the nation, as the people of the nation have a right to enter. If it does not mean that, as I am sure it does not, then I am right in pointing out the state of things that exists before Disestablishment and the state of things that would exist after Disestablishment, and I say that I attach much more importance to that denial of the general duty and obligations of the Church than I do to the taking away of the rather scanty funds she has now the liberty of enjoying. But, though I feel so strongly on the question of Disestablishment, the question of Disendowment is an important one too. Suppose the Church in Wales were an effete Church to-day, suppose her neglectful ministers had allowed Church life and Church principles to languish, and supposing they were enjoying large incomes derived from the private charity of former times without doing any real work to earn them, there might be something to be said against them, and you might be entitled to say that they had failed to perform the duties of the trust reposed in them, and that others were entitled to a share of the property they had misused. But the property of the Church in Wales which you desire to take away is the smaller portion of the money used for spiritual purposes by that Church. There comes to supplement that provision the large liberality of the people of Wales, and you are proposing to take away those Endowments, not because the Church has failed to do its duty, not because you can point to one single object of human interest on which that money would be better spent, but for reasons which are differently stated in different places, and which have to be examined in the light of speeches somewhat more candid, I think, than the speech of the Home Secretary. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary opened this Debate in a speech of a most judicious character. It was very moderate in tone and very sympathetic in expression. He greatly influenced, I think, the mind of my right hon. Friend who followed him, and he certainly made a great impression on my right hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University; but I hope the Home Secretary will forgive me if I do not take the programme and outlines of this movement from the speech made by him in the House of Commons, but prefer to take them from a speech made by the Leader of the Government when addressing the Welsh people. A most remarkable difference in tone is observable between the gentle phrases in which the Home Secretary addressed himself to this work of spoliation, and the phrases of the Prime Minister when he was face to face with the people in Wales. Lord Rosebery made a speech before the Liberal Federation at Cardiff, in which he declared to an enthusiastic audience the principle on which he was proceeding in this matter. Referring to the doctrine on which the Irish Church had been disestablished, he said:—

> "It was a missionary Church which converted nobody, it was an alien Church which alienated everybody; it kept for a minority what was meant for the nation, and so, coming as it did, as a stranger to Ireland, repudiated, as it was, by the masses of the nation, it passed away. You now have another Church, another Church Establishment which has embodied these characteristics, and which in like manner is doomed."

Now, Sir, what are the characteristics which Lord Rosebery declares to be the characteristics of the Welsh Church? He first said that it was an alien Church which came as a stranger to Wales. Is there anybody who will get up and defend that as a matter of historical knowledge? We had from the Home Secretary the other day a most remarkable exhibition of what he called historical retrospect. Starting with a quotation from Giraldus, he came down to the time of the Commonwealth, and wound up with an extract from a book written in 1831. He might as well have given a description of the characters of the Sovereigns of this country by starting with an exposition of the exploits of Cœur de Lion, followed by a sketch of the domestic history of Henry VIII., and winding up with a few words about George IV. Somebody said in the Debate in 1894 that the Church was forced upon Wales by the Norman Kings. ["Hear, hear!"] Hear, hear! to that! Why, Sir, the Church existed in Wales for seven centuries before William the Conqueror set his foot in this country, and had been a living and advancing Church all those centuries. I know that, under the Norman Kings and their successors, both in Wales and England, there was far more deference paid to a foreign authority than the people of England or Wales desired, but both in England and in Wales that passed away, and if there is any Church in the world which can fairly be called a national Church it is the Church in Wales. The Tudors came, and with them the Reformation, when the authority of the foreign Bishop was repudiated and the Church was released from the corruptions that for centuries had affected it With the blessings of the Reformation there came Welsh Bishops into Welsh sees. Those who talk now about the language of Wales, and are enthusiastic to preserve that language, pass over the New Testament, which was translated into Welsh by one Bishop, the Old Testament, translated by another Bishop, and the multitude of religious books written by the clergy in the Welsh language. Between the middle of the 16th century and the end of the 18th century, it was the Church that founded the grammar schools of Wales; it was the Church—not an alien Church, but the Welsh Church, with Welsh Bishops—that during those two centuries and a half raised and purified the character of the people of Wales. There has been no departure from that. It has been suggested that this was not a Welsh Church. Well, Sir, in the year 1863, it was necessary for Parliament to pass an Act in order to have English services in the Churches in Wales, because it was the law of that time that, wherever the Welsh tongue was commonly spoken, the whole service must be performed in the Welsh tongue. I venture to suggest, with regard to this matter, that the Home Secretary is right in his contention, and that he has very properly dismissed from our consideration the ideas of Lord Rosebery with regard to history. But, Sir, Lord Rosebery went on to say that this is a Church which, like the Irish Church, converted nobody and alienated everybody. Nobody has denied—the right hon. Baronet who has just spoken has admitted—that the Welsh Church is a living and advancing Church. When you find Churches being multiplied; when you find the ministers of those Churches increasing largely in numbers; when you find schools filling up, and when you find much larger congregations and a larger proportion of communicants coming to the services, what is that but evidence of growth? If it be true that the Church has alienated everybody and converted nobody, though I do not wish to make a sectarian controversy of this, I would ask how is it that one of her Bishops has ordained 21 Nonconformist ministers within some years gone by as ministers of our Church? Surely it is hard to speak these words of a Church which is living purely and living well up to the level of its responsibility. If it alienates everybody, what about the statistics of Church membership? When I spoke in this House some two years ago upon the question of the Welsh Church, and had to deal with the subject of its numerical strength, I expressed the opinion, which I still hold, that the Church in Wales represents one-half of the population of the Principality. I appreciate that there are some fair reasons as well as some Party reasons for the refusal to take a census of religious opinions, and I am quite prepared to say that if you could get the facts without taking a religious census, it would perhaps be better to leave that step alone. I will say a few words about the statements of the Nonconformist bodies in Wales, though I do not myself, in regard to the question of Disestablishment and Disendowment, attach very great importance to the less or more of numbers. I argue this matter upon other lines, and upon other principles. But, as the matter is suggested, let me just say this. Our opponents refuse, it may be for good reasons—I do not mean for good reasons as a matter of tactics, but for fair reasons—to have this census taken; but in the absence of this religious census what are we to do? There are in Wales definite religious bodies which are not at all backward in claiming the membership, the allegiance, of the people of the Principality. They have their roll of membership and they have their roll of adherents. The members are persons, as I understand, who give some practical testimony, by contributing to the funds or taking some part in Church work.

MR. ABEL THOMAS (Carmarthen, E.): No.

*SIR E. CLARKE: Which don't they do?

MR. ABEL THOMAS: They conform. It has nothing to do with paying so much to the Church, or anything of that kind. They conform and become members.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I did not put it as the only test that they paid money to the Church. I said they either paid to the Church or took some active part in the work of the Church. I suppose the term conform in that sense means that they are in some sense real and effective members of the Church to which they belong. If they neither paid any money nor attended the services of the Church, I confess I do not see why they should be put down as members. I believe that these bodies, with a proper generosity, do not exclude those that are too poor to contribute to the affairs of the Church, but, with a proper and a large generosity, bring within the privileges of her membership all they can, all who are inclined to join in their worship, and they add to the list of members the list of adherents, and in their list of adherents they include all the living persons, young children even, who belong to the families of those who are members of those bodies. I am not complaining, at all, that they claim too many. I am not criticising the standard which they set up for the membership or the adherency of those bodies; but what I say is that if they have taken that view of membership and adherency, and issue a statement as to their adherents and members, one is entitled to say that you have there the full roll of the body to which they belong. Now, what is the result of that? There are 1,775,000 people in Wales, and only 832,000 persons are either members or adherents —that is to say, are in any way connected with the four great Nonconformist bodies which are the mass of the Dissenting population. Taking the statements of these Dissenting bodies, and allowing those statements to be in the fullest degree accurate, I believe it certainly would not be too much to say that the Nonconformist bodies cannot claim one-half of the population of the Principality. But it was said, when I last spoke on the Welsh Church, and it is said now, that you must not count all the others as being members of the Church there. Why not? [Laughter.] This is a serious question. They are members of the Church of England in this sense —and I am quite sure that the hon. Gentlemen who laugh do not mean to treat a suggestion of this kind with ridicule, or as a jest—that they have the right at any time of their lives to join and to partake in the services of the Church.

Mr. ABEL THOMAS: So have the Nonconformists.

*Sir E. CLARKE: I agree; but that makes my point the stronger. That is precisely the splendid, the grand privilege of the Church, that whether they bear or forbear, the Church doors are open, and the Church teaching is given, and they have the right to come within its walls. Though I would not press these matters too far, no one on the other side will deny that the poor, who too often take little heed of Church, or of any religious observance, and the careless, who, for the greater part of their lives may be indifferent to these considerations, do, again and again, in the time when trouble and the anxieties of life fall upon them, turn to that Church to which alone they belong, and thorugh whose ministers they can fairly and rightly claim the consolations of the Christian religion. Since I made that speech to which I have already referred, there has been a language census. It does not prove very much, but, as far as it goes, it supports the conclusions that I then arrived at as to the members of the Church in Wales. It is admitted by the representatives of the Nonconformist bodies that their ministrations only touch with comparative lightness the purely English-speaking population of Wales. In that census it appears that there were 760,000 persons in Wales who cannot speak Welsh at all, and the existence of that number of people is another indication of the validity of those statistics which I referred to when I addressed the House before. But the Home Secretary had two matters upon which he commented. He spoke of the number of Communicants, and also of the number attending Sunday school. Now, with regard to communicants, I believe that in the number assigned to the Nonconformist bodies many people are included who are not communicants at all. The total of the members of the Nonconformist bodies is 381,000, who may or may not from time to time become communicants. But the number of 114,000 given as that of communicants in the Church in Wales represents those present at the administration of the Sacrament upon a single day in the year, and it is impossible to say by what figure this number should be multiplied in order to learn the total of the effective members of the Church. The test of the Home Secretary is a somewhat erroneous test. Then he gave 515,000 as the number of persons attending Sunday Schools. That figure is wrong by 80,000, the actual number of Calvinistic and other Methodists said to be attending these schools being 434,000. I wonder the right hon. Gentleman did not suspect his figures himself. When he represented that five-eights of all Nonconformists of all ages attended at Sunday Schools, it must be remembered that Sunday Schools in the Welsh Nonconformist bodies are very different from Sunday Schools in the Church. A Nonconformist Sunday School partakes of the nature of a general service which adults attend, whilst our Sunday Schools are confined almost exclusively to young children. The adults attending the Nonconformist Schools ought not to be counted twice over. The Home Secretary gave us some extraordinary figures respecting Anglesey. He said that out of 76 parishes 27 had no resident pastors, and that the tithes of those 27 parishes amounted to £7,000. Some one has given the right hon. Gentleman some strangely wrong information, and the real facts are as follows:—The population of Anglesey is just over 50,000; there are 76 parishes and 67 resident clergymen in these 76 parishes; there is Church accommodation for 20,382 sittings; the average income of the 67 clergymen is only £117 each; and the tithes are only £10,000 in the gross and under £8,000 net. It is probably in this part of Wales that the Calvinistic Methodists are strongest and the Church of England weakest, and yet here 56 out of the 83 Calvinistic Methodist Chapels are without a resident pastor. These facts are capable of verification, and they go far to refute the inferences which the Home Secretary asked us to draw from the figures which he gave. We are told that the reasons for this proposed Legislation are reasons which do not involve hostility to the Church. The Home Secretary not long ago spoke of the "outworks of these crumbling citadels where the Church was intrenched," and suggested that the defenders of the Church would fight much better if they were relieved from the burden of defending these outworks. I confess that I hesitate to accept such expressions of sympathy. It is the people who are fighting behind the outworks who know best the value of those outworks, not the people who, from conscientious or political reasons, are seeking to dislodge them from the camp which they are defending. I am aware that, according to the ripe wisdom of Lord Bacon, "Adversity doth best discover virtue," but I never realised until this Debate that one could claim credit for reducing another man to poverty because it would enable him to display virtue. We have heard that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church, but I am not aware that in any Christian country a memorial has yet been set up to Diocletian in commemoration of the services he rendered to the Christian religion. But I will take another and still more apt example. There is a narrative in the Gospel of St. Luke which describes the doings of some men who haunted the road between Jerusalem and Jericho, and there robbed a traveller. Until I heard this Debate, I had no idea how admirably those men could have justified themselves for engaging in such work. Judging from what has fallen from the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Scotland, and the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, I can imagine one of these men saying—

> "This man has been much too wealthy for his soul's health. I am sure that poverty is the provocation of many virtues, and if I take away his property he will be able to show a virtue, a resignation, a patience, for which he has unhappily never had an opportunity before."

That would be in the Home Secretary's manner. And I can fancy his companion taking the other branch of the argument—as the Secretary for Scotland does—and saying:—

> "I shall put this money to very useful purposes, and no one can possibly contend that it is wrong in me to take it, because I happen to know that the good Samaritan is coming along the road."

After the Debate that we have heard I assume that such arguments must be held to be reasonable in the region of Christian ethics; yet if they had been addressed to the unhappy traveller by the persons actually engaged in despoiling him, whom the inspired writer somewhat harshly describes as thieves, I think he might have been forgiven if some such offensive words as "hypocrisy" and "cant" had issued from his protesting lips. Spare us the insult of your sympathy. I very much prefer our franker and more straightforward opponents. We had a speech last year from the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, and he said what he meant in a straightforward way. He asked :—

> "Was it a matter of surprise that Nonconformist farmers, whose lot was hard enough, should object to be forced by law to contribute £200,000 a year towards subsidising a horde of raiders who were invading their territories and trying to capture them?"

The hon. Member denounced the Church in Wales as an anti-national institution which had been forced upon Wales by Norman Kings, and whose whole history had been a history of warfare against Welsh nationality. In the speech delivered on Thursday by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Leeds (Mr. Lawson Walton), a speech which was excellent in construction and delivery and was a very interesting contribution to the Debate, there was one sentence which filled me with amazement. My hon. and learned Friend said he acknowledged—

> "that there were now signs in the Church of Wales of a revival of activity, such as must no doubt give great encouragement to its adherents, but was this the hour for repentance and retrieval? Hon. Members on his side of the House thought that another hour had struck—the hour of retribution."

There was a murmur from this side of the House, and the hon. and learned Gentleman went on to say—

> "It might be said that the history of the Church to which he had been alluding was ancient history, but the ecclesiastical doctrine of retribution was that it handed on its legacy to the third and fourth generations."

That is a hard saying, and I much prefer these assailants to spare us the insult of their sympathy. When you are attacking that which we hold most dear, let us have the straightforward declarations I have read just now, and then we can meet them. You say that the Church in Wales is an anti-national and a foreign Church; you say that the Nonconformist farmer pays for the services of that Church; you say the hour of retribution has come, and punishment must be inflicted. We answer you that history disproves the first contention, that the facts of the case are inconsistent with the second, and that your doctrine of retribution is not a Christian application of the moral law, is not indeed a reasonable interpretation of the Divine law. I should like now to turn to another set of considerations altogether. Suppose it to be right to Disestablish and to Disendow the Church; suppose it to be decided that for reasons we will assume to be good this proceeding is to take place, there are three conditions I may fairly lay down as conditions which should be observed in the exercise of this business. To us, to many of us at all events, this is a matter of honour and of conscience, upon which we can make no compromise; upon which no expression of Parliamentary opinion, no expression of opinion of constituencies would entitle us to surrender the position which we conscientiously defend. But I recognise, of course, that there are many who honestly take a very different view, and who have been satisfied that it is right that at this time the Church in Wales should be Disestablished and Disendowed. Assuming that the Church should be Disestablished and Disendowed, let me ask hon. Gentlemen, and especially my hon. and learned Friend, who, I believe, is to follow me in this Debate, to consider the stipulations which I am going to make as to the way in which this change should be carried out. The stipulations are three; and it is in accordance with them, if they are reasonable, I think this Bill should be judged. In the first place, I think, there should be no more interference than is absolutely necessary with the religious activity and work of the Church. I think, in the second place, there should be as prompt an ending as possible of the causes of hostility which have led to difficulties in Wales itself; and, I think, in the third place, that the most beneficial use which can be made of the property set free for secular purposes should be provided for and secured by the Bill. I declare that each one of those conditions is violated directly and flagrantly by the provisions of the Bill. I can imagine ways of dealing with Disestablishment and Disendowment, against which, however we might attack them on grounds of principle, we might have no valid criticism to offer. There was a Disestablishment and Disendowment 25 years ago of another Church. I looked upon the Irish Church Act in 1869, and I look upon it now, as a national sin;

and I believe that in the years that have passed since 1869 that dereliction of national duty has been visited upon us by the troubles we have had in Ireland. I do not propose to discuss the details of that matter, but in the Disendowment of the Irish Church an arrangement was made by which the new Church might find some opportunity for carrying on its work. There was a commutation arrangement. The clergy of the Church, who desired, as all true ministers of the Church would desire, that the work which they were doing should not end with their lives, were able to obtain a bonus by commuting their interest, and that money was serviceable in maintaining and carrying on the work of the Church. That was one way in which the thing might be done. There was another way, and one which I would much prefer to the way suggested by this Bill. It might be arranged that on a given date, say twelve or fifteen years hence, the whole of the property of the Church should be taken from it, and all life interests should be absolutely neglected. I believe, if that were done, within the fifteen years there would be an uprising of spirit and generosity on the part of the Church which would, at the end of that time, enable us to carry forward, with undiminished vigour and efficiency, the work which she is doing in Wales. But what is the way in which it is proposed by the Bill to deal with the matter? There is proposed a prolonged process, which may last 40 years, of the breaking down here and there in different parts of Wales of the Church Endowments, and of the efficient working of the Church. It depends upon the accident of single lives. There is no sense in the arrangement. There may be in one parish some old incumbent who lives on to a venerable age, not very capable of work for the Church, not doing much for the body to which he belongs, secured to some extent in his income by the provisions of this Bill, and living on there, a burden rather than a benefit to the people amongst whom he is. On the other hand, you may have a parish where some active young clergyman has gathered round him a body of working men who are carrying on the work of the Church. A sudden illness of two or three days may take him from their midst, and with his death disappears absolutely the support and endowment of the organisation. I have puzzled to know how it is that anybody has contrived such a process as this. I have I think, found a parallel — it comes from the extremity of torture of an Eastern nation. I believe that the most fearful death in China is death by a thousand wounds. The victim—and the case which I read of was the case of a person who had robbed a Church—the victim guilty of that crime is fastened hand and foot. There stands in front of him the executioner with a pliant sword, and with dexterous hands he flicks from the living body fragments of flesh, thus prolonging the agony. It is called the death of a thousand cuts, because the executioner, if very skilful, may inflict a thousand separate agonies on his victim before he dies. That is what you are doing with the Church in Wales. For 30 or 40 years this Church will be lingering on, breaking down here and there without notice, without warning, without an opportunity of providing for the carrying on of the work. That is what you call a sympathetic and generous treatment of the Church. I agree there is some provision made for the interests of the Incumbents. Is there nobody else to be considered besides the Incumbents and persons drawing incomes from the Church? Some days ago I had delivered to me the Corporate Associations' Property Bill. I will read the names on its back; they are those of seven wise men of the East—Mr. Howell, Mr. Barrow, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Benn, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Pickersgill, and Mr. Stuart. By the Bill—

> "It is hereby declared that where a corporate or *quasi*-corporate association has been, or may hereafter be, established for the advancement of commerce, art, science, religion, or learning, or of the interests of certain trades or professions, or for any other purpose not being a trading purpose, and it appears from the instruments relating to its establishment, or from the fact of its having existed for many years, or from other evidence, that such association was established with a view to a continued existence, in any such case the property belonging to, or held on trust for, the association shall, in so far as the application thereof is not affected by any express trust, be deemed to be, and to have been, held on trust for the members for the time being of the association and their successors."

That is admirable. The wisdom of the East helps us in this matter. Let me apply those words to the Church in Wales. The Church in Wales consists of a number of corporations, and this Bill proposes that where a Corporation has been established for the advancement of religion, and established with a view to its continuance, the property shall be deemed to be held in trust for the members of the association and their successors. Property held by an Incumbent is held in trust for himself and his successors in the clergy. But you make no provision for his successors. You only allow the present Incumbent to put in his pocket the income that belongs to him; but his curate, who may have been working with him for years, is sent adrift without one penny of compensation. Who is the successor to the incumbent in the corporation whom the Government is going to compensate? There is no one. We take the view that the clergy of the Established Church hold their income in trust for themselves and the persons who may be appointed to succeed them; but they hold them in trust to do religious services and religious duties to the people amongst whom they are placed, and it is those interests of the people that the Government absolutely refuse to notice at all in their Bill. My next condition is that there should be a prompt ending of those causes of hostility which prevail in Wales. As to that I need only read an extract from a speech made by the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George) in reference to this Bill—

> "If the Bill were passed in its present shape, instead of removing the causes of disturbance, it would increase and intensify them, because the people would have an inducement to create disturbances in order to get rid of the clergy."

I will illustrate that quotation. Under this Bill the tithes are to pass to the County Council. There is no provision in the Bill that the Incumbent is to receive a sum equal to his income on the average of previous years. The provision is, that the tithes are to be transferred at once to the County Council; that the County Council is to collect the tithes if it can, and if it wishes to, that the County Council is to be allowed such expenses as the Welsh Commissioners may deem necessary for the purposes of collection, and then that what remains of the tithe is to go to the Incumbent. Now, the Home Secretary knows that that there are already two counties—Cardiganshire and Pembrokeshire—in which the collection of tithe is extremely difficult, owing to the hostility of the County Councils. On the 15th of last month there were 125 judgments for tithe outstanding in Cardigahshire, which had not been collected because the County Council would not allow protection to be given to the officers of the Court in making the collection. That is the situation of the Incumbent who has to depend for his tithe on the activity and sympathy of the County Council. As the hon. Member for Carnarvon has pointed out, there would be, under this Bill, for the next 30 or 40 years, conflicts in the collection of tithe which would make the relations between creeds in Wales far worse than they have ever been in the past. Again, there are parishes where there is glebe, but no tithe; and those parishes are treated differently. The glebe is to be vested in the Parish Council——

MR. ASQUITH: Subject to the life interest of the Incumbent. It is only the reversionary interest that passes to the Parish Council.

*SIR E. CLARKE: According to my reading of the Bill the glebe is vested in the Parish Council immediately; and what the Incumbent would get from the glebe would depend upon the management of the Parish Council.

MR. ASQUITH: The intention, and, as I believe, the effect, of the Bill, as drawn, is not what the hon. and learned Gentleman supposes. The vesting of the glebe in the Parish Council is subject to the existing life interest of the Incumbent. If the Bill has not that effect as it stands I will see that it is amended. The intention is that the Incumbent should remain as he is at present. It is only the reversionary interest that passes to the Parish Council.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I am very glad to receive that assurance. I think the words of the Bill, as they stand, would have a different effect. Of course, if that is the arrangement which the Government propose with regard to glebe, it must be the arrangement with regard to tithe, because they stand on precisely the same footing. My third stipulation is that the property which is to be taken shall be as beneficial to the public as possible. I think the arrangement proposed is one which defeats the object of the promoters of the Bill themselves. The hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas) said, with regard to this particular part of the question on the First Reading of the Bill :—

> "In his own constituency in the Aberdare Valley, numbering over 50,000 persons, no one would gain anything at all out of the parochial fund. On the other hand, in the parish where he lived, with tithe worth £100 a year, a small farmer and a blacksmith were the only other parishioners."

I think these inequalities are very striking. On this point a statement was made by the Home Secretary, speaking at Hull, on January 23, which, I think, is so important that it should be remembered. The right hon. Gentleman said :—

> "But I have never put and I never will put the case of Welsh Disestablishment upon the low sordid footing that it will materially benefit the Welsh people. So far as they are concerned —still more, so far as you and I Englishmen and Scotchmen are concerned—it is perfectly true that we shall not be one penny the better when the Welsh Church is disestablished."

Mr. ASQUITH : That is not a strictly accurate report of what I said. I said that so far as we were concerned—that is, the English people—we would not be benefited ; that so far as the Welsh people were concerned, I did think it would be a material benefit to them, but that the question of material benefit was not, to my mind, the governing principle of this Bill.

*Sir E. CLARKE : Then I take it that Englishmen and Scotchmen will not benefit, and I believe that Welshmen are disputing whether it is 1s. 8d. or 1s. 11d. per head that they will get from this measure. But the curious thing is that the 1s. 8d. or 1s. 11d. per head is not to accrue now. It will be accruing during the next 40 years, incidentally, to one part or another of the Welsh people. Surely, that is the weakest way of dealing with a matter of this kind. If you have made up your minds to disestablish and disendow the Church in Wales ; if you desire to make a scheme for using, for other purposes which you think better, the money which is now being used for religious purposes, surely the right way is to establish a central fund which shall be applied to deal with these matters, and not to make it a question

that when a particular fragment of the Church revenue falls in, it shall be used according to the fashionable delusion of the time, with regard to higher education. I cannot imagine a more wasteful way than that. I find that in one parish in the county of Denbigh the income from tithe is £740 a year, and the glebe is one acre. Within seven miles of it there is another parish where the glebe is worth £450, and there is no tithe at all. The whole result of the arrangement contemplated in the Bill will be that during a long series of years there will occasionally fall in a small scrap of revenue, not sufficient in amount to be of any use to any one, but quite sufficient to keep alive that which it should be our desire to put an end to at once and for ever —the personal hostilities that are now afflicting the Church in Wales. There is one matter upon which I desire to make my protest, because I feel it, and Welsh Churchmen feel it strongly, and that is the treatment they are to receive with regard to cathedrals. In the course of these debates I have heard these cathedrals spoken of as national monuments, and I referred back to the Irish Church Act to see whether there was any mention made there of national monuments. I did there find a mention of national monuments in which the House will be much interested. Section 25 states—

> "Where any church or ecclesiastical building or structure appears to the Commissioners to be ruinous, or if the church be wholly disused as a place of public worship and not suitable for restoration as a place of public worship, and yet to be deserving to be maintained as a national monument,"

then it is to be held by the Commissioners of Works. Now, they talk about the cathedrals of Wales as national monuments, and I suppose that on the railing round these cathedrals there will be a sort of Board of Works board, with the Welsh Commissioners' names upon them, stating the conditions under which the Church is allowed to use these particular cathedrals. In the Irish Church Act you dealt with disused churches, but it is not to be so in Wales. What are you dealing with in Wales ? Take the cathedral of Llandaff. Forty years ago that cathedral was practically a ruin. The nave was grass-grown ; the ivy climbed, and birds built their nests in its roofless and unwindowed walls, and at the end of it there was a small choir, shut in by an imitation Italian *façade.* There was a scanty congregation, a poor and meagre service, and a choir in which no anthem had been sung for 200 years. What is the state of things now? During those forty years that church has gained beauty and strength, and it is now one of the finest of Christian temples in Wales. There is a spacious nave, the church furniture is of the best; but the best furniture there is in the men who are ministering the work of the Church and the great congregations that come in to join in the service of prayer and praise. That is a Church that is to be taken away as if it was to be a national monument, and the Church in Wales is to be insulted by being told it has no cathedral of its own, but is, by permission of three Welsh Commissioners, to be allowed to celebrate service there. Sir, it is an outrage. I have said that with us resistance to this Bill is a matter of honour and conscience, and that we could not abate that resistance and could not compromise. I know on the other side that that is not the case, and that it has been taken up as a matter of political expediency for the purpose of getting votes in the constituencies, or in this House. [*Ministerial Cries of* "No."] I will undertake to prove it. The Solicitor General is junior Member for York; the senior Member for York sits on the Opposition side. The hon. and learned Member would never have been Member for York at all if, in 1885, he had not made a bargain with the Churchmen of that city, by which for seven years he was bound, not to vote in any attack on the Church of England. When the Welsh Church Question came up in 1886 he did not vote, neither did he in 1890 and 1891. Now he has made a different bargain; he has freed himself from the old arrangement; he is at liberty to vote against the Church, and that is why he is junior Member for York; and he never would have been Member for York at all if he had not entered into that bargain, which he kept for seven years. Our opinions and beliefs in this matter, Mr. Speaker, are not of that class. We do not put them off or put them on to suit the exigencies of a Parliamentary candidature or of a Ministerial difficulty. We attach a far more serious meaning to this matter. We believe, in the prolonged agony which is to be inflicted upon the Church in Wales, there will be a distinct and serious interference with the welfare of the people of Wales, and we believe, unquestionably, that interfering with the Established Church by Disestablishing and Disendowing it is a far graver and more important question than perhaps any other we are discussing in this Parliament. There are those among us who think they hear from time to time above the tumult of our trade and above the sounding tread of our Imperial progress, discordant sounds which they think are the warnings of a coming storm that will test every fibre of our national character and national strength. I do not speculate upon the future; but, whether it be passed in sunshine or in storm, I am certain of this—it is not by your colossal warships, your spacious commerce, your galleries of art or museums, or even by your crowded schools, that the true greatness of your Empire will be strengthened and sustained. This, you may think, is a small amount you are dealing with, and it is in some respects. It is about as much as you spend on one museum in London. It is about half as much as you propose to vote to yourselves as a reward for enjoying the greatest privilege of your lives. Within the next 12 months we shall spend on the Army and Navy in this country 37 millions of money—as much as would pay the Endowments and income of the Church in Wales for 250 years. Think in what the strength of your Empire really is. It is not to be found in the splendour of material success. It is righteousness that exalteth a nation, and we believe that it will be a dishonour to Parliament, an injury to the people, an offence to God, if, in this hour of your material prosperity, you filch from an ancient and living Church its scanty patrimony, and, if you break down the only system which insures the universal teaching of that Divine faith which has moulded and elevated the character of our race, and which alone, to nations as to individuals, sanctifies prosperity and consoles misfortune.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD, York): I should have indeed been very glad if my hon.

and learned Friend had been able to conclude his extremely interesting and, no doubt, very eloquent speech without making the charge, which he thought fit to make against hon. Members sitting on this side of the House, that they were doing this, not from any belief that they were doing what was right and just, but for some low, party, pettifogging motive. My hon. and learned Friend did not stay there, but in order to illustrate that charge, he held me up as the terrible example which was to point the particular accusation, and he exhibited me as being an illustration of that depth of political depravity he was at that time engaged in discussing. Nothing would have induced me in this House to trouble hon. Members with any matter that is personal to myself, because, though I believe I have the good fortune to have in this House many friends on both sides, yet I do not for a single moment believe that they would be willing that the time of the House, and this great Debate, should be consumed with what I will call, in this instance, pettifogging criticisms of personal conduct. What is it the hon. and learned Gentleman has got to say about me? It is true that when I stood for the City of York in 1885 I was asked whether I was prepared to vote for the Disestablishment of the Church in England or in Wales, and the answer that was given by my then colleagues and myself was, that this was not a question which could be entertained by the Parliament to which we were being returned. Those who put the question were not satisfied with that answer. They said :—

> "That is all very well, but, supposing there should be any measure of Disestablishment introduced into that Parliament, will you vote for it?"

My colleague and I said we would not. When I was returned to represent the City of York in 1886 I gave one pledge in particular with regard to the Irish policy of the Government. With regard to other matters of policy I informed the electors that I had already communicated what my views were, and I did not renew that pledge, but I felt, as a man of honour, that impliedly I had. When these questions came before the House of Commons my colleague and

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I construed that general statement as excluding us from voting on Welsh Disestablishment; but I took very good care, before the election of 1892, to state to my constituents the action I proposed to take with regard to this matter, and my hon and learned Friend said, What is the result? The result, he said, is that you are now junior Member for York. I have never been anything but junior Member for York. I have always run second, and I do not know that I have ever quarrelled with my place. But when my hon. and learned Friend taunts me with my position, with my declaration, and with votes given in this House on this and a similar measure, I may be permitted to remind him that I have had the honour of being returned unopposed for York. So much for the personal reflections introduced into this Debate by my hon. and learned Friend. Let me now deal as quickly as I can with some of the questions which he dealt with, but without, I hope, occupying anything like the time which he occupied. First, however, let me say that we welcome him back to Debates of an ecclesiastical character. In past times he has made eloquent speeches on ecclesiastical questions, but of late some of us were becoming alarmed lest the ecclesiastical reputation of my hon. and learned Friend should become eclipsed by that of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster). In the speech we have just listened to, my hon. and learned Friend has reasserted his position as the leading ecclesiastical authority on that side of the House, and it will now be for my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Isle of Wight to dislodge him if he can. The speech just delivered may be divided into three parts. In one part my hon. and learned Friend spoke strongly, as he said he meant to do; and I do not know that, holding the views which he does, he spoke too strongly. In another part he put a series of points; and in a third he perorated. I do not propose to deal with his peroration. I propose to deal with his criticisms on the Government proposals. Speaking of the Church of England in Wales, he complains that the Church has come and sought relief from Parliament in respect of its condition; that that relief has been denied; and he pointed to some of my hon. Friends below the Gangway as holding them responsible for that denial of justice. What an extraordinary attitude is thus taken up by my hon. and learned Friend in the inception of his speech! He comes here complaining of the Government measure by which it is intended to disestablish the Welsh Church, and he points to one of those very grievances emphasized by my hon. Friend the Home Secretary in introducing the Bill as a matter of which the Church had a right to complain. I should have thought that anybody who loves that Church, and wishes to see her worked to her best advantage, would rejoice to find, and would accept with pleasure, an opportunity for removing from her that disability, and for making it possible for her to herself effect those reforms without coming to a Parliament which is unsympathetic to her. My hon. and learned Friend said he regarded Disestablishment as a more important matter than Disendowment. I was glad to hear him say so. We have heard so much about the loaves and fishes from that side of the House that it would appear that hon. Members opposite considered the whole essence of the Church in Wales and its power of doing good depended upon its Establishment and upon its Endowment. By far the greater force has been laid upon the latter. [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Opposition Benches.*] My hon. and learned Friend says that after the Church has been Disestablished those persons who have a right to attend religious services in the Church of England will be denied access to places of worship in Wales. [Sir E. CLARKE: "Will have no right."] But how is it going to be shown that they will have no right? Does he mean to suggest that, merely from a sentimental realisation of having no right, they will abstain from visiting places of worship? ["No."] The House understood him to mean that the Church of England in Wales, when disestablished, would close its doors to all except those who belong to its community.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I never meant it, and I never said it.

*SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD: I certainly gathered from what he said that he meant to indicate that there would be some denial of admission. He says he did not mean that. Then for what reason was his argument advanced? If he did not mean that which I have attributed to him, it is not necessary for me to occupy the time of the House in further comment on that criticism of my hon. and learned Friend's. In referring to the Prime Minister's speech at Cardiff, I do not know whether it was a wilful misconception of my hon. and learned Friend as to what is the intention on this side of the House with regard to the history of the Church in Wales. An alien Church it is. An alien Church it has become. An ancient British Church existed beyond a doubt. Wales became a conquered country and her Church was taken from her. That Church, which had been the Church of the Welsh community, was taken from the Welsh and was transformed into an English Church; places of profit were filled by Englishmen; and in that sense, and in that sense alone, is it contended that the Church had become an alien Church. My hon. and learned Friend said that he had stated before, and he adhered to the statement, that the Church of England in Wales contained half the population of that country. We know that it contains a much larger proportion of wealth and influence in Wales. How comes it, then, that so few are brought within its doors? How is it that it cannot hold its own against Nonconformist places of worship, conducted by poor men, and supported by the working classes of the community? How comes it that the results, so far as public worship and attendance are concerned, appear so miserable in comparison with the results which have been put before the House in respect of Nonconformist places of worship? And from another point of view the question may well be asked, How comes it, if the Church possesses half the population of Wales, that they make such a poor show on the question of Disestablishment when election time comes round? We have also been reminded of the fact that, although there are three Conservative Members in the House representing Welsh constituencies, the voice of not one of them has yet been heard in this Debate. Let some of those who come here and talk so glibly about the work which the Church has done in Wales go down into Wales and test the sense of the people there. Let my hon. and learned Friend the

Member for the Isle of Wight, for instance, exchange the congenial atmosphere of the Isle of Wight for that of any Welsh constituency at the next election, and we shall see his face no more in this House. My hon. and learned Friend drew a pathetic picture of the influence of the Church with the poor, and he says that in times of sickness and poverty it is to the Church of England that the poor go. What experience has he which enables him to apply that observation to Wales? Can he quote any instance which will justify the application of the statement to Wales? He cannot. The criticism, therefore, is worthless. The House, however, has heard from those who can speak with experience what the Nonconformist Churches are doing for the poor in Wales, and we hear, too, what the poor are doing for these Churches. The hon. and learned Member came to the case of Anglesey, and he quoted some figures which I assume he took from the letter, the supplemental letter, which appeared from the Bishop of St. Asaph in *The Times* of to-day, and those figures he opposes to the figures of the Home Secretary. I accept his figures for the moment. Let us see what they prove. According to the figures read by my hon. and learned Friend there are some 33 parishes in Anglesey which are grouped together with other parishes. Now, will the House see what follows from that? That there are 33 places in Anglesey without ministers detailed off to attend to the spiritual wants of those parishes. Is not that precisely what hon. Gentlemen opposite have applied in the course of this Debate to the condition of the Nonconformist Churches? Have we not heard over and over again that one of the main charges brought against the Nonconformist Churches is that they do not provide resident ministers in all parishes where there are Nonconformist Churches? I come now to three points which my hon. and learned Friend put to the House. The first was that it was an unnecessary interference with the religious work of the Church, and he illustrated that in a most unfortunate manner. He said he regretted the Irish Church Act as a national sin, and I watched with some interest the effect of that statement upon the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, because if that Act was a national sin he is a national sinner. Let me refer to some observations made in October, 1882, by Lord Plunket, who was then Bishop of Meath, and who is better qualified to speak of the effect of that Act than my hon. and learned Friend. In those observations this noble divine called upon his hearers, before they gave way to querulous murmurings, to remember that the dark cloud—the so-called national sin—had not been allowed to break over their country until, in the providence of God and by ways that they should never have selected for themselves, their Church had been prepared for the change. And he pointed out how, had they been called upon to face a Land League agitation at a time when the clergy were the ministers of a State-protected Church, receiving their tithes from the poor or even from landlords, some of them in needy circumstances—how intolerable would have been their position. Now, however, the very disaster which seemed to threaten their downfall had been over-ruled for their good. My hon. and learned Friend says he prefers the scheme followed in that edition of national sin—he prefers the commutation scheme. But the House heard the explanation of my right hon. Friend as to the reason which deterred the Government from adopting the precedent of the Irish Bill. He said the result was that the Church fund was constantly being drawn upon and tapped with no permanent benefit to the nation. What my right hon. Friend had attempted to do, and what I think he will succeed in doing, is to preserve for local communities the benefit of those moneys which have been for so long diverted from the nation who are entitled to benefit by them. ["No."] I never anticipated that the hon. Gentleman who says "No" would agree with me in that observation, so that will release him from the necessity of interrupting me in future. Even if you do not adopt that plan, let us have, says my hon. and learned Friend, at the end of 15 years the whole of this system coming automatically to a close. Upon reflection he will see that that is not a plan which would hold for a single moment. I can imagine his enthusiastic peroration upon such a suggestion—how

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he would have pictured to us these good men going about their work with the sword hanging over their heads which, at the end of the period, was to fall upon and destroy them. I think he will see that our plan is a plan much more acceptable to the Welsh people, much better for the Disestablished Church, and much better for the clergy connected with that Church than either of the alternatives which my hon. and learned Friend suggests. My hon. and learned Friend wants a prompt ending of the difficulties, causing, as he says, irritation in Wales, and he alluded, in illustration, to the provisions contained in the Bill with regard to the preservation of life interests after the Church is Disestablished. I should have thought this was the last portion of the Bill which would have been subjected to attack or criticism of the kind. My right hon. Friend's intention is to prevent the Disestablished clergyman who is to be paid his life interest being brought into personal connection with the County Council, and therefore he has provided that the County Council shall collect the tithes, that they shall hand the money so collected to the Welsh Commissioners, and that the Welsh Commissioners shall hand it over. But that is not all. It provides that the amount, whether it is collected by the County Council or not, shall be a debt from the County Council to the Welsh Commissioners, and the concluding words of the section provide—

> "The Welsh Commissioners shall pay to each person who at the passing of this Act has any existing interest in any such tithe rent-charge in substitution for and in satisfaction of that interest and as part of the emoluments of his office the amount payable to them by any County Council in respect of the tithe rent-charge."

*SIR E. CLARKE said, the 16th Section stated that the County Council was to pay to the Welsh Commissioners the annual amount of the tithe rent-charge, after deducting the sum allowed by the Commissioners for cost of collection, rates, and other out-goings other than Income Tax, and when that amount was allowed the Council had only to pay over the amount they received.

*SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD: Yes, there is no dispute on that point; but my hon. and learned Friend has failed to follow the point of my right hon. Friend, which is that he has put the Welsh Commissioners between the clergyman and the County Council, and he has made the tithe a debt to be recovered from the County Council by the Welsh Commissioners, and the amount the clergyman is entitled to receive and to recover from the Welsh Commissioners is the amount payable. To say that this is an irritable condition of things is, in my opinion, an abuse of language. The third point raised by my hon. and learned Friend was as to the use to be made of the property, and I presume his remarks on this point were in criticism of the appropriation of the money by my right hon. Friend to local purposes. This, of course, has been a very difficult matter to deal with, and I suppose no hon. Member would go so far as to say that particular localities ought not in any way to be regarded—that the money should be applied to all districts, and particularly to some large towns. There are some, doubtless, who would say that the money should be applied only to those parishes in which it is paid; but my right hon. Friend had to consider what was an equitable adjustment of these conflicting claims, and in the Bill it is provided that local interests shall be regarded in the distribution of the money that is paid. Although my hon. and learned Friend provided the authors of the Bill with alternatives in regard to other matters, he had no alternative whatever to suggest with respect to this point. I do not know whether the hon. and learned Member was in the House when the right hon. Member for East Birmingham (Mr. Matthews) addressed the House. [Sir E. CLARKE: "Yes."] Then the hon. and learned Member must have been astonished to hear a certain proposition which the right hon. Gentleman laid down. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking as a Dissenter—a position which he had a perfect right to take up—laid down a proposition which, I confess, I was not prepared to hear from him after the character of the speeches that had been delivered on that side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was no advantage in inquiring into the legal or moral right of Parliament to entertain this question. It is beyond question that we have a legal and a moral right for what we are doing, and our authority for that is the right hon. Member for East Birmingham. He further said that, as to precedents, there were abundant precedents for what was being done.

*Mr. HENRY MATTHEWS (Birmingham, E.): What I said was, that there was abundant precedent for dealing with the Church, but not for introducing this Bill.

*Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD: My right hon. Friend has not denied the quotation from his speech that—

> "there is no advantage in inquiring into the legal and moral right of Parliament to entertain this question."

[Mr. Matthews: "Because it has the power."] Yes, and because it has the legal and moral right. The right hon. Gentleman went on to refer to the necessity of proof that the exercise of this legal and moral right in the present case was just. Well, what is the proof? Is it proof if we are able to show that for years it has been ascertained beyond all doubt that a Church which has existed as a national Church has ceased to be so—if we are able to show that the Church of England in Wales has ceased in any way to command the sympathies of the Welsh nation? I think the right hon. Gentleman will admit that when that is the case the time to act has come. If he is in any doubt I would read to him a statement made in this House in 1850, by Mr. Roundell Palmer (now the Earl of Selborne) on this question. He said:—

> "It appears to me that the only ground on which an Established Church can rest in any country, the only ground on which it is defensible and can be permanently maintained, is that it is the embodiment of the true religion believed in by the mass of the people."

I am not going, at this period of the Debate, to go back into the statistics which have been quoted on one side and the other, but we contend that it has been made abundantly clear by statements coming, not precariously from those who hold briefs for the Church, but from those hon. Members for Wales who come direct from their constituencies, that the Church in Wales certainly does not meet that condition. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the question of tithe and to its voluntary payment in the past, but that voluntary action is now utterly lost in obscurity. The debt was recognised, and then enforced by Parliament, and from that time, aye, and long before, much of the land that is now subject to tithe was brought within the area which made it responsible for the charge. Since that time the debt has been recovered, not as an ordinary creditor recovers his debt, but by exceptional means placed at the disposal of the tithe-owner. On another point the right hon. Gentleman, taking the date of 1703, asked what rational explanation can be given for taking that date, and fixing it as the time from which private endowment should be respected. It is not a date that has been fixed as arbitrarily as the right hon. Gentleman thinks; we venture to think, some of us, that it is a very generous date. It is the date of Queen Anne's Bounty, and that is the date from which the machinery was supplied, through which private individuals, without offending against the Mortmain Act or any similar enactments, could constitute endowments for Church purposes. But it is something more than that. Before 1703, if any benevolent person wished to devote his money to the good of the community, he had no choice between these religious communities. There was one religious community, and one alone, that was recognised by law. The Toleration Acts had been passed, if I remember rightly, in 1689; there had been certain proclamations of indulgence, but directly afterwards they had been withdrawn. The Established Church held the field, and no selection or election could be made by the benevolent person. But from that time we have the growth of other religious communities, as time went on, relieving themselves from the thraldom under which they had suffered, and becoming the fit and proper objects of benevolent gifts. So my right hon. Friend, it appears to me honourably and properly, has taken that time as being a dividing line before which no option or selection was permitted, and that, I venture to think, is the very rational reason that can be given for the introduction of that date. Then, says my right hon. Friend, would you take away the property of private persons? Why not, then disendow all round? Does the right hon. Gentleman who makes these suggestions rightly appreciate what will be the position of the Endowments of the Church when she has once been Disestablished? While she has been established and has existed as a national Church, the moneys of that Church have been held by her in trust for the nation, but when Disestablished she ceases to be of a national character, and ceases to be the trustee of the nation. Private individual property stands in no sense on the same basis. The argument of Disendowment all round, is not applicable. These societies are trustees of their money for themselves and are in no sense trustees of these moneys for any other persons than themselves. The statistics, which, after all, are the backbone of the Government case, have been given us by the men who have the means of information at their disposal. What, then, is the duty of any Liberal Government, if the condition of things has been established to which I alluded in the extract from the speech of Mr. Roundell Palmer? Since 1877, when Lord Hartington, representing the Liberal Party, spoke at Edinburgh, there has been no doubt as to what should be the policy of the Liberal Party in this matter of Disestablishment and Disendowment. I ask leave of the House to read his words, because I wish afterwards to call the attention of the House to the construction which was put upon these words in a leading article of *The Times* newspaper, which was published on the day after that speech was made, and which drew, as I venture to think, the right and the only conclusion from those words as to what was their bearing on the future policy of the Liberal Party. These are the words:—

> "The question—" that is, of Scotch Disestablishment—"has not, so far as I know, been made a test question at elections. All I can say is, that when, if ever, Scotch opinion, or even Scotch Liberal opinion, is fully formed on this subject, I think I may venture to say on behalf of the Party as a whole that it will be prepared to deal with this question on its merits and without reference to any other consideration. I claim for the Liberal Party that its sympathies are all with the Presbyterian Churches, and that when the time comes, as I have said it may come, that Scotch opinion shall be fully formed upon the subject, the Liberal Party in England will do its best to give effect to that Scotch opinion without undue consideration being given to any other circumstances connected with the question."

That was the important statement made. What was the construction that was rightly put upon it? On November 7, 1877, there was published these words, which are an extract from a leading article in *The Times* newspaper—

> "He [Lord Hartington] considers that a step has been taken towards Disestablishment in Scotland by the Patronage Act of the present Government. He believes that a growing sense of injustice is felt by the Free and the Dissenting Churches in that part of the kingdom, and if the Scotch like to press the question he will not be deterred by the effect which such pressure might have upon the prospects of the Church in England. In other words, Lord Hartington has plainly declared that he is not in principle in any way opposed to the adoption of Disestablishment alike in Scotland and England as a measure to which the Liberal Party would be pledged."

Now, mark what follows—

> "It is evident after this Disestablishment has passed into the category of debatable Party questions, and the speech in this respect constitutes a new departure of the first importance for the Liberal Party."

I accept that, Sir, as being an absolutely true criticism upon that speech. We have accepted that responsibility. We have had the case put before us of the condition of the Church in Wales, which warrants us in regarding it again as a case in which that responsibility rests heavily upon us; and I am glad that the right hon. Member has succeeded in laying before the House for its, I hope speedy, acceptance, a Bill which, I venture to think, is a measure of justice which the Welsh people have a right to ask at our hands, and whatever, according to my right hon. Friend, may have been my electoral shortcomings in the past, I shall have great pleasure in voting for it in the present case.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, that in the Home Secretary's speech language served, for the time only, as a mask for the right hon. Gentleman's real thoughts and intentions. Hon. Members for Wales, in listening to his cold utterances, must have longed for the old war cry, "A Church of banded raiders." The real reason for bringing forward this question of Disestablishing and Disendowing the Church in Wales was because the Welsh Members had pressed it upon the Government. The allusions which had been made to the hall-mark that was wanting to the Nonconformist Church, and to social distinctions, showed the real reason why Welsh Members were pressing the Bill forward. He knew of no hall-mark claimed or possessed by the Church of England save that of their great Captain. He had never known any measure brought forward to deprive the Church of any, even of its minor, rights or privileges, without its being claimed that it was in the best interests of the Church herself. He sometimes wondered at the moderation of hon. Gentlemen. They believed the Church possessed a fund of latent strength to carry her through the storms of the future just as she had braved the persecutions of the past. It had been said that promotion in the past had been tempered by jobbery. This Bill was robbery tempered by politics. The cry of religious equality, which used to be put forward, had given place to that of political necessity. The Government had been induced to reward the industry, patience, and perseverance of a section of their followers by bringing forward a Bill to Disestablish and Disendow a Church which was a standing menace to their pride and political hopes. The opponents of the Welsh Church said they were anxious to do good to the Church. It was not sufficient to do good, but it should be done in a good way. They were not doing good in a good way when they deprived the Church of moneys which lawfully belonged to her. The truth was, it was extremely difficult to find any common ground on which they could argue the question. It was useless to bring forward figures when they had no common basis on which they could start. The Home Secretary seemed to have abandoned the question of an alien Church. With regard to the question of majorities if at any future time when they had Disendowed and Disestablished the Church there should arise another Church amply endowed by pious men, and that Church fell into a minority, would they again apply the doctrine of majority and seize her money because she was no longer the Church of the majority? When they relied on majorities alone it was not an argument which could be accepted by anyone who held religious convictions, as a just reason for Disestablishing and Disendowing a Church. That the Welsh Church was not the Church of the majority they required some proof, because as regarded that census for which the friends of the Church in Wales had always asked, no real argument had been brought forward. If the reason given by the hon. Member for Newport against a religious census was the only one he had to give, it was decidedly a weak one. The Home Secretary said it was only since 1811, the date of secession of Calvinistic Methodists, that the Church in Wales had been any strength in the land. Twenty years later, when the Nonconformists were most friendly to the Church, they declared their teaching identical with the the Thirty-nine Articles, and protested against separation. In 1834, he found that the Nonconformist ministers passed this Resolution—

> "We deeply lament the nature of the agitation now so prevalent in the Kingdom, and which so assuredly has for its object the separation of the National Church from the State."

So, only 60 years ago, the Church of England was acknowledged to be the National Church by the unanimous voice of the Welsh Methodists, who formed the large majority of the Nonconformists of the country. Hon. Members opposite might ask why things had changed so suddenly and quickly? He believed it was because Dissent had changed its ground, and had marched *pari passu* with Radicalism. He took a quotation from an English Nonconformist magazine in 1888. Speaking of Nonconformist preaching, it said—

> "Real preaching has become a relic of the past. Enter into conversation with any minister; it is politics first, politics second, and politics to the end of the chapter."

He believed it was politics, and politics alone, which formed the basis of the present agitation against the Church. The belief of its opponents evidently was that the Church was making such strides of advancement in the hearts of the people that if left alone for a few years longer she would completely outstrip them in numbers, and become in numbers and other ways the Church of the people. They found the Church as a whole too strong to attack. They wished to attack the Church in England as well as in Wales. Because they found the Church as a whole was too strong they attempted to attack her in Wales first. They hoped that, by taking a few stones from the foundation, to make her so weak that when the time of real conflict came, the whole fabric might fall about her ears.

Laymen of the Church in the past had not been sufficiently on their guard against allowing her to be robbed of her minor privileges. This was no longer the time of loud disputes and weak convictions. They knew what the enemies of the Church meant, and were thoroughly prepared to meet them, and he believed there would be no dissentient voice among those who believed in the Church when a Division was taken on the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint District) said, he rose to support the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill, because the Disestablishment of the Church had been for a long time past the one great question in Wales that had overshadowed every other. Its importance, and the strength of the feeling in favour of Disestablishment, was sufficiently attested by the Parliamentary representation of Wales in this House. Let it be taken any way, by the number of Members returned to this House to support Disestablishment, by the number of votes recorded in its favour, by the acknowledged preponderance of Nonconformity, by the results of the last four General Elections, by the steady and unchanging adhesion of all the Welsh Liberal representatives to Disestablishment as compared with the wavering and uncertain adhesion, if not the absolute hostility of some of the Unionist candidates in Wales to the Establishment, the voice of Wales had been expressed with a clearness and an emphasis which could not be mistaken. It was the national demand of Wales. No other important contentious measure had ever received so large a measure of support in the Country which it affected, and it was solely because Wales was a small country and commanded few votes in the House of Commons that this question had not been settled long ago to the satisfaction of the Welsh people. The majority by which Wales had steadily recorded its convictions in favour of Disestablishment was simply overwhelming, and the attempts made to get rid of it were as amusing as they were futile. They could almost pardon their disingenuousness because of their extreme ingenuity, but this stupid obstinate majority would not be got rid of. It stared them in the face at every turn. Even if it did not exist, justice to Nonconformists and to the highest interests of the Church herself would still clamour for Disestablishment. But that permanent solid unchanging majority simply defied contradiction or explanation. It had caused everyone, whatever view they might take of this controversy, to come long ago to the conclusion that the Welsh as a nation were devoted above all things to the principle of religious equality. But they were asked why, if they allowed the local majority to prevail in Wales, should they not allow it to apply elsewhere? The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight asked would the representation of London be any justification any argument, for the Disestablishment of the Church in London. The circumstances of London in relation to the Church formed no parallel to those of the Church in Wales, but if those circumstances were such as to result in the return to Parliament of ten Members out of every eleven pledged to Disestablishment; if the last four General Elections in London had turned on Disestablishment; if a majority of votes similar to that recorded in Wales had been recorded in London for Disestablishment; if several constituencies had been won by the supporters of Disestablishment without a contest; if the voice of London had been incessantly clamouring for Disestablishment; if the London papers had been continuously agitating for Disestablishment; if the question thrust itself into local elections and confronted Londoners in all their public concerns; if for 25 years it had been the one burning question in London,—then he said without hesitation that London would have had Disestablishment long ago, and what would have been granted long ago to a City ought surely to be granted now to a Nationality with such distinctive characteristics as Wales possessed. It was now conceded that there was such a thing as Welsh nationality. Last year they were told that it did not exist. This year they were informed that the Church had preserved Welsh nationality. The opponents of the Bill having denied in the interests of the Church that there was such a thing as Welsh nationality, and now being obliged to admit its existence, promptly took credit to the Church for having preserved it. At one moment they were told that they were attempting to disestablish the Church of the Welsh nation; at another they were accused of attacking the Church of England, and were informed that there was no such thing as a Welsh Church; that it was merely four Dioceses of the province of Canterbury. If they were simply dealing with four Dioceses, then there was no National Church of Wales, and they claimed accordingly the right to deal with it as an alien institution; but if there was a National Church of Wales then the Welsh nation for whose benefit the Establishment was supposed to exist, had a right to decide whether it should be continued or not. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir Richard Webster) brought out an entirely new argument in the course of the Debate. He stated that only 18 Welsh Members could speak the Welsh language. He could not understand the relevancy of the argument from the Establishment point of view. He could understand the argument being used on this side, but not on that side of the House. No one denied the separate nationality of Scotland or Ireland, or their right to separate treatment. Ireland had had Disestablishment, and with Scotland it was only a matter of time. And yet the proportion of Irish Members who spoke Erse, or of Scotch Members who spoke Gaelic, was much smaller than that of Welsh Members who spoke Welsh. The contention was, therefore, in favour of, and not against, Disestablishment. But the hon. and learned Gentleman's argument invited comparison. If there were only 18 Welsh Members in favour of Disestablishment who spoke Welsh, how many Members of this House were there who supported the Establishment in Wales who could speak that language which the Church was supposed to have done so much to foster? Only one! 17 to one! And this was one of the great reasons which the hon. and learned Gentleman, with his immense ability and his two years' study of the subject, gave them for the retention of the Establishment in Wales. The argument which had been most frequently used against the Bill in this Debate had been the absence of a religious census. He should welcome a religious census if it could be fairly taken. He only wished the work could be done by a recording angel, but next to that infallible process, the census of the polling booth, with the protection the ballot box conferred, was the best census, for after all the all-important question was how many in Wales were for or against the Establishment. But supposing they had a religious census, would the supporters of the Establishment accept it as conclusive, and what majority would they require to make it conclusive? So far no majority had been deemed sufficient. The majority at the polls, enormous though that had been, was set aside, the majority of the elected representatives, which surpassed any majority recorded in any part of the United Kingdom for any contentious measure, was deemed insufficient; even a majority in the House of Commons, which represented the whole of the United Kingdom, was not adequate. It was true that there was no majority for Disestablishment in the House of Lords, neither would one ever exist under compulsion. How could they expect it? The House of Lords did not contain a single Welsh or English Protestant Nonconformist, and it was ridiculous to regard that body as an impartial authority on the subject. Every majority they had hitherto obtained had been regarded as insufficient, the truth being that no majority would ever satisfy those who desired to maintain the Established Church in its temporal and official supremacy over other Churches, and they could only regard the demand for a census as a dilatory plea. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol had asked whether the grievance of Nonconformists against the Church was not a social grievance, because the Church of England was the Church of the wealthier and more educated classes. He might observe, in passing, that that contained an admission of one of their cardinal points—namely, that the Church in Wales was the Church of the wealthier classes. Unquestionably when the State granted exceptional privileges and favours to one denomination, when one religious body was the official Church, its social prestige was thereby greatly enhanced. That must inevitably be resented by other bodies who had borne the heat and burden of the day, and had for generations done a great work for the welfare of the people, and therefore for the good of the State, without that exclusive State recognition which was granted to the more favoured body. They were told that after Disestablishment the Church would still possess social advantages superior to those which belonged to Nonconformist churches. They did not expect Disestablishment to put an end completely to social inequality as between Churchmen and Nonconformists—what they did expect was that, as far as Wales was concerned, every Church, whether it were Episcopalian, Independent, Wesleyan, Baptist, or Calvinistic Methodist, should be placed on a footing of complete equality in the eye of the the law, that the law should not single out any Church for preference, priority, patronage, or privilege, or retain any Church in that position. Some had actually gone so far as to say that the agitation for Disestablishment was an irreligious movement, and that it was based on secularism. Those who used such an argument had not the slightest knowledge of Wales or of its people. There was no more religious people in the world than the Welsh. The existence of 4,000 Nonconformist chapels in Wales was due to the deep religious convictions which formed the chief characteristic of the Welsh people. In rural districts in Wales it might be said that the chapel was the pivot upon which the whole of the life of Nonconformists turned. The Sunday School system in Wales was not only the most elaborate and complete known in the Christian world, but it was permeated throughout with a spirit which had made it one of the best and, speaking in the highest sense, one of the most useful educational factors in the life of the Welsh Nation. The Sunday School was not, as in England, attended by children only, but by adults of all ages, and as long as aged people were able to creep from their houses to the Sunday School they continued their attendance at the service, which perhaps they loved best of all. In Welsh Sunday Schools tradesmen, farmers, artizans, agricultural labourers, all sorts and conditions of people, sat side by side as fellow scholars discussing the most important problems that related to the highest interests of the human race; and the influence of the Sunday School in drawing out the intellectual powers and developing the spiritual life of the people was simply indescribable. It was from these people, and not from secularists, that the Disestablishment movement had arisen. To say that the movement was based on secularism was to libel the Welsh people. Much had been made of the argument that the Church procured the translation of the Bible into Welsh. But whose duty was it to translate the Bible? At the period when Bishop Morgan did his work, nearly the whole Nation belonged, at least in name, to the Church. Was it the duty of the great, powerful, and wealthy State Church, or that of a handful of poor Nonconformists—if there could be said to have been any Nonconformists in Wales at that time—to translate the Bible into Welsh? If the Church had not provided Wales with a Bible in the Welsh language she would have neglected the plainest and most urgent duty that was laid upon her. When they saw the performance of this plain and urgent duty blazoned forth, as a special virtue of the Establishment, they obtained some idea of the straits to which its defenders had been driven in their endeavours to find arguments in support of its continued existence. But if a holy and scholarly Bishop translated the Bible into Welsh, how did Welsh Nonconformity set about the all-important work of circulating Holy Scripture? Between the years 1630 and 1680, there was only one edition of the Bible published by the instrumentality of the Church, a large folio of 1,000 copies for pulpit use. But during the same period the Nonconformists published nine editions, consisting of about 30,000 copies of the whole Bible, besides 40,000 of the New Testament alone. They had heard during the Debate that if apathy, sloth, and deadness of spirit prevailed in the Church during the last century, she had in recent years exhibited considerable activity. For every spiritual result which had followed in the wake of that activity he was sincerely thankful, but he ventured to say that the Church owed a great debt of gratitude to the Disestablishment agitation for all that it had done to awaken the Church out of her lethargy, and if the shadow of coming Disestablishment had done so much good, they might expect much more benefit to ensue to the Church when she was entirely freed from State control. But if the Church in Wales had grown in recent years he felt bound to say that in Wales strong objection was taken to some of the methods by which that growth had been fostered. In many parts of Wales the Establishment was regarded as an aggressive, proselytising agency. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol asked: "How can a Church help being aggressive if she is living and growing? She must be aggressive upon sin and unbelief." They had not the least objection to any amount of aggression on the part of the Church on what was really sin and unbelief, but they did object very strongly to aggression upon what was regarded as "the sin and unbelief" of Dissent. But if the Church had grown in recent years, the Nonconformist bodies had, on their side, made immense progress, as had been shown by the Home Secretary, with whose speech the Welsh Members were perfectly satisfied. In the year 1775 the number of Nonconformist congregations in Wales was 171; in 1816 they had increased to 993. That year brought them to within living memory, for the right hon. Member for Midlothian was then a boy of six. What progress had been made by Welsh Nonconformity during his lifetime? In 1861 the number of Nonconformist chapels in Wales had augmented to 2,927, and in 1892 the number had increased to 4,262. They had more than quadrupled within living memory. More than 3,000 Nonconformist places of worship had been added within the last 80 years. Take a specific instance of the growth of Nonconformity in recent years. It showed what was being done for the rapidly increasing populations of the mining districts of South Wales. In 1866 there were four Churches and 11 Chapels in the Rhondda Valley In 1870 there were seven Churches and 21 Chapels. In 1884 there were 11 Churches, 70 Welsh Chapels, and 28 English Chapels. In 1892 the Establishment had 16 Churches, the Nonconformists had 117—75 Welsh, and 41 English Chapels. And this was a district in which the Church boasted of the great progress it had made. What did these figures mean? They meant that Nonconformity had come to stay in Wales. It had struck its root deep into congenial soil. One of the best tests of the vitality and energy of a Church was the amount subscribed by its members for religious purposes. It had been wisely said of Nonconformists by an eminent defender of the Establishment, that "paper adherents do not give money." He would take the figures relating to one of the four principle Nonconformist bodies in Wales—it was doubtful whether that one was the strongest. The collections of the Welsh Calvininistic Methodists in the years 1869 to 1880 amounted to £1,711,401; in the years 1881 to 1892 to £2,204,037, an increase of £492,636. This increase was obtained in spite of the fact that that body was strongest in the agricultural districts where the population had considerably declined. From 1869 to 1893 that body alone has collected for religious purposes more than £4,000,000; and the other Nonconformist denominations had supported religion with splendid liberality. Could any better proof be given of the wonderful triumph of the voluntary principle? Not a penny of this money had been wrung from a reluctant peasantry by the agency of the tithe bailiffs; it has been the free-will offering of their hearts, and what they asked the House to do was to place the Church in Wales in what they regarded as the same advantageous position as the Nonconformist bodies. She would be more highly respected; she would, in the end, secure an even larger annual income than she at present enjoyed, and income would be derived, not from a coerced and an unwilling people, but from the good will of the members of her own Communion. In conclusion, he asked what was to be gained by prolonging the contest? Those who hold that religion was the supreme interest of the country surely could not approve of a prolongation which might possibly stave off land reform for a while at the expense of some of the highest interests of the nation. To advocate the policy of waiting until the Church obtained a majority in Wales, was to cherish the vainest of vain hopes, and Welsh Nonconformists would never give up the struggle for religious equality. Disestablishment must come, and the contest would be prolonged until it was attained. There would be ceaseless hostility in Wales until the question was settled. Were they going to drive the

Welsh people to the conclusion that no justice to Wales was to be expected from the Imperial Parliament, that they could not get what they demanded when a Conservative Government was in power, because the House of Commons would not pass it, and that they were not to have it when a Liberal Government was in power, because the House of Lords would not pass it? When a nation was unable to get relief for a pressing grievance by legislation, what was it to do? Nonconformist Wales was the most law-abiding country in the world. Did they want to inculcate contempt for the law in such a country? What more could the Welsh people do to prove their determination to get rid of the Establishment? They had done all they could; they had done infinitely more than would ever be required of the English people, and the majority of Welsh representatives in this House represented the ripe and settled conviction of Wales. The Welsh people did not accept the Established Church in Wales as the Church of the Nation. They protest against the continuance of the Establishment. They thought it was wrong in principle and injurious to religion to select any denomination for State patronage, or to continue the Establishment of any Church, however ancient, which did not command the adhesion of the people at large. They look forward with hope and confidence to a time when this root of bitterness should have been removed, and when the Church, freed from the mere dross of earthly and temporal privileges, humiliating to other Churches, would unite with those Churches in promoting the highest welfare of the Welsh people.

*MR. E. R. WODEHOUSE (Bath) said, he hoped, while stating the reasons which decided him in giving an unhesitating vote against the Second Reading of this Bill to be as successful as the hon. Member who has just sat down in saying nothing likely to wound susceptibilities in any quarter of the House. The supporters of the Bill had been at pains throughout the discussion to assure the House that towards the Church, as distinct from the Establishment, they entertained only feelings of goodwill; and they commended the Bill to the House because it would release the Church from trammels and fetters which now hampered the better attributes of its life. He did not desire to impugn the sincerity of such professions, but, nevertheless, politics and political exigencies were transparent in every line of the Bill. He did not wish to imply that the good of the Church was a fictitious consideration, but it was a subsidiary consideration The Bill was a political measure, just as the Irish Church Act of 1869 was a political measure. And just as in the Irish case there were two currents of political opinion, blending into one stream, directed against the Established Church. On the one hand there was the objection in principle to the connection of Church and State, and on the other there was the claim of the people in a certain area of the United Kingdom for separate treatment on the ground that they were a distinct nationality. When Disestablishment in Wales was first mooted in the House, 20 or 25 years ago, the movement was animated wholly, or almost wholly, by repugnance to the connection of Church and State. There was no talk then of "an alien Church," or of "a Church of Conquest," and he believed that such phrases would have met with no sympathy from the true founders of Welsh Nonconformity. But in recent years the original movement had been coloured and reinforced by what were called "national" aspirations. Hence it was owing to the contagion of Irish Nationalism which had touched Wales, that they now heard all this talk about ancient wrongs inflicted on Wales by English Kings, Ministers, and Bishops, and that grievances and crimes of long bygone days had been dragged out of oblivion. These grievances and wrongs would have ceased to be felt or thought of had they not been nursed by politicians who had a game of their own to play. Had not some of their own Saxon ancestors suffered harsh usage under the Norman Kings? What was the use of brooding over that? It was monstrous to judge the 12th or 16th or even the 18th century by standards of political morality which prevailed in the latter half of the 19th century. It was quite possible that the 20th or the 21st century, if this Bill passed into law, might look back on this Parliament with a blush of shame and reproach. If

Welshmen chose to dwell on the discontent of Wales under Henry II. let them remember also the contentment of Wales under the Tudor and Plantagenet Kings. If Welshmen were attached to their own language, they should acknowledge that it had been saved from possible extinction by its introduction into the services of the Church under Anglican auspices. They ought not to fasten on the evil side of things only, and surely, even in politics, they should be "to faults a little blind and to virtues very kind." It had been said that Disestablishment must come, and that the Established Church had lost for ever the opportunity of regaining the attachment of the Welsh people as a whole; but there was no finality in politics. Measured by the life of nations, Welsh Nonconformity was still a mere chicken, and where there was no impassable gulf of doctrine or creed to perpetuate estrangement, it was better to contemplate ultimate reconciliation and reunion in a brighter future. It was said that the Church in Wales was denationalised. He did not admit that; but, if it were so, why should it not be re-nationalised? He deprecated strongly these antiquarian researches into bygone wrongs, when used only to inflame prejudice and passion in distant generations of men. Reference had been made to the precedent of the Irish Church. He was not going to deal with the differences between the two Churches, but precedents sometimes furnished warnings as well as examples, and instructive warnings could be gathered from the fate of the Irish Church. In the Irish case the Disestablishment of the Church was approved by the Country at a General Election when it was the sole issue before it. It was not muffled up in a multifarious Programme, and it was approved by a majority in every part of the United Kingdom.

*Mr. MACNEILL: No, there was not an English majority.

*Mr. WODEHOUSE thought that there was an English majority, but anyhow the Bill passed through the House of Commons by a majority of about 120. Why had that Bill such a volume of support behind it? Because the public believed that the measure would prove to be a crowning act of conciliation and concord with Ireland, and put an end to such incidents as the Clerkenwell explosion. But what became of those hopes? They were soon shattered in the dust. They were all familiar with recent Irish history, and they knew what years of passionate strife and social disorder in Ireland came after that so-called healing measure of Disestablishment. Then, there was another warning to be drawn from the Irish Church as to the influence of precedents on other Churches. Some Churchmen had publicly advocated the sacrifice of the Church in Wales as a sort of ransom for the better security of the Church in England. Bishop Thirlwall in 1869 derided the notion that Irish Disestablishment could ever be adduced as a precedent for Welsh Disestablishment, but the sequel of events had proved him to be wrong. They were told that this was a question for national option, but if this Bill were passed, and national option no longer served its purpose, some other option, either provincial or diocesan, or even parochial option, would be set up in its place. Then the long agony of piecemeal Disestablishment would set in, unless aggression were resisted at the very outset, and the advocates of Disestablishment were taught by experience that they had undertaken a task beyond their strength. This Bill was a blow aimed not simply at the Church in Wales, but at the whole Church. The general tenour of this Debate had removed all doubts on that point. The main argument in support of the Bill was, that 31 Welsh Members out of 34 were in favour of this Bill. He spoke with all respect of Wales, but he could see no reason for treating one or two millions of people in Wales differently from one or two millions in Yorkshire or London. Excepting in a few Statutes of quite recent dates, England and Wales had long been linked together in legislation and administration, and he trusted that they might ever remain so. As they held the Church in Wales to be an integral part of the Church of England, the English people had a direct and immediate interest in the settlement of this question. If the Bill were passed through the House of Commons it would be carried over the heads of the majority of the English Members. The Solicitor General referred to a declaration of Lord Hartington with reference to the Church of Scotland, which had always been a distinct Church. He knew not what were the views of the Duke of Devonshire on the question of the Church in Wales, but unquestionably there was a very marked difference between the position of the Church of Scotland and that of the Church of England in Wales. He regretted the opposition which had been offered by Nonconformists to the taking of a religious census, and reminded hon. Members that in 1860 a religious census was strongly advocated by the Home Secretary of that day—a Liberal Statesman of dispassionate judgment, rare freedom from prejudice, and great breadth of view, Sir George Cornewall Lewis. A census taken on a specific point must surely furnish a better criterion of actual matters than an estimate gathered from mere conjectures founded on Parliamentary representation, to which many and varied issues contributed. Even if they had been prepared to admit that the demand of Wales for Disestablishment was justified by the great preponderance of Welsh Members who supported it, they could not admit that the Government was justified in undertaking this very serious task, full of far-reaching consequences, either by the magnitude or the composition of its own Parliamentary majority. Majorities were fleeting things; they were here to-day and gone to-morrow; and what was meat to one majority might be poison to its successor; and when they were handling a venerable and majestic institution blended with a nation's entire life, which had called forth from generation to generation some of the best and deepest feelings of human nature, it was not the proper business of statesmen, who ought to look beyond the exigencies of the passing hour, to snatch a decision on the fate of such an institution from the slender and dwindling majority of a moribund Parliament. Where, besides, was the need for haste in this matter, except indeed as to the declared policy "of filling up the cup?" Cup-filling was only an ephemeral interlude in politics, but the issue now before the House concerned the gravest and most enduring of human interests. There was no question of religious liberty at stake in this controversy. Freedom of opinion and freedom of worship in Wales were suffering nothing and losing nothing to-day. They were told, however, that the principle of religious equality was violated by the existence of the Establishment. Then, he asked, if that be so, where was the solid substance of the grievance thus engendered? The position of the Church was no arbitrary or capricious preference by the State of one among several competing denominations. It was an heritage of long descent, the fruit of times when Church and State were co-extensive; and surely such an origin might mollify, if not entirely remove, from Nonconformist breasts the sense of an invidious preference being manifested for the Established Church. Where did the alleged inequality offer any practical hindrance to the Nonconformist in his own religious work? Then the House had been invited to admire the working of religious equality in the Colonies, but testimony on that point was by no means unanimous. A few months ago he heard a Bishop of an Australian Diocese, just translated to an English See, speaking on this point—a Bishop of Liberal tendencies and democratic sympathies accustomed to cultivate cordial relations with Nonconformists; and what had he to say about it? He stated that, while living and working at Bradford, before he went to Australia, he was assured by his Nonconformist Friends that if the State Church were swept away they would join and worship together. What did the Bishop find in the Australian Colony where there was no State Church? He said that the rivalry and jealousy between denominations was intense and perpetual; and so far from there being peace and harmony between the Church and other denominations the differences there seemed to be greater than at home, and the possibilities of union more remote. Then the Bishop added these significant and emphatic words. He said that, strong Churchman as he was, he would rather see some other denomination established in the colony, and live there himself as a Dissenter, than contemplate a continuance of the existing state of things. There was another element of the alleged religious inequality, about which a word or two must be said; he referred to tithes and other Endowments of the Church. The complaint was that one denomination had the exclusive possession of property which was the common inheritance of all denominations, and of the atheist not less than the Christian; but he must join with other speakers in disputing the contention that tithes were national property in any other sense than other property vested in corporations for specific uses, and that tithes were more national than the property of other religious denominations. He held that the bequests of pious donors, though made centuries ago, if still applied to living and beneficent uses of a kind contemplated by those donors, and neither wasted nor abused, were as much entitled to respect by the Legislature, as the gifts of yesterday. The property of the Church was not expended on obsolete, or trivial, or unworthy uses. He was not aware of any theoretical objections to Endowments; and certainly Nonconformists did not object to them in practice. The Bill did not propose to prohibit the Disestablished Church from acquiring future Endowments, and its authors sought to reassure the Church by saying that all the Bill took away would soon be replaced by the liberality of Churchmen; but where there was an existing fund for spiritual services, accumulated by the piety of successive generations, and still properly administered, it would be suicidal folly (if nothing worse) to deplete and dissipate it by diversion to other objects which, though perhaps good in themselves, were neither spiritual nor religious in any strict sense of the term. Many human wants could be safely left to the operation of the ordinary laws of supply and demand; but among such wants ministration to spiritual needs could not be reckoned. Those who required it most were often the last to crave it, and the least likely to provide it for themselves. The property of the Church was confided to honest and capable trustees. He had not a word to utter in disparagement of other Churches and denominations; but where could they point to any religious community, either in respect of spirituality, care for popular education, missionary enterprise, or active philanthropy in the cause of the poor and suffering which presented higher standards of practice than the Church of England? They heard much in these days about the necessity of the State recognising its obligations and responsibilities to a greater degree than heretofore in respect of the promotion of national happiness and social well being. It was strange, therefore, that this moment of all others should be chosen for breaking up an institution which had been specially identified with the service of the poor, and whose wealth was the heritage of the poor. The Established and Endowed Church of England could not be spared in any corner of the land accustomed to receive its ministrations. There was as much need now, as there had ever been, for its high mission, and for all the resources it could lavish on its work; and, believing this to be the conviction of a majority of the British people, he was not apprehensive that the Bill, even if read a second time, would ever find its way to the Statute Book of the Realm.

MR. W. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire) said, the hon. Member for Bath was the first Liberal Unionist who had spoken in the Debate, and he had told them, in language which it was impossible to mistake, what course of action he intended to pursue. Amongst the many extraordinary statements the hon. Gentleman made, he said this Parliament would be looked upon with blushing shame because of this Measure. He was curious to know what the Leader of the hon. Gentleman would have to say of one of his followers who could so speak of a Bill which, as they understood, the Leader was about to support. He did not know whether they would be disappointed with the course of conduct the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) was about to adopt. He hoped that on this occasion the right hon. Gentleman would find no means of escape; if, after his eloquent advocacy of Welsh Disestablishment, he did, not only the Welsh people, but every friend of religious equality would look with some incredulity upon the future speeches and actions of the right. hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Rees Davies) could not hope to throw any new light on this question. It was not his intention to deal with the historical aspect of the question or to deal with the question from an academic standpoint—from the standpoint of the English Disestablisher—or to go into the matter from a numerical point of view. He would merely offer a few remarks from the broad point of view of a Welsh Member, as one whose privilege it was to represent a large constituency—a constituency which felt very intensely on the subject of Welsh Disestablishment. Remarks had been made by some of his hon. Friends on the unreality of the Debate. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had been disposed to taunt Her Majesty's Government with introducing subjects of an unreal character, and in which no definite issue could be taken. If there ever was a question upon which there was an unreal opposition it was this. The opposition had emanated entirely from hon. Gentlemen who knew nothing whatever of the Welsh people or of their characteristics; it had emanated from English Members. The three Gentlemen who represented in the House Welsh Toryism were not only conspicuous by their silence in the Debate, but by their absence from the House. Now, he conceived that what the supporters of the Bill had to prove or to satisfy the House upon were two things, namely, that there was a real injustice urgently requiring redress; that there really existed a feeling of discontent in Wales which was growing stronger every year, and that the demand for Legislative reform was really Constitutional. There could scarcely be any question as to the just proposition. It was admitted on both sides of the House that there was, to a great extent, a feeling of discontent in Wales at the present time. The only issue between them was as to how they were to meet the grievance. It was unnecessary to reiterate at length the statements which had been made by many of his colleagues as to the protest of thousands of Welsh Nonconformists against the imposition of tithes. Welsh Nonconformists objected, as sincerely as it was possible for any men to object, to paying towards the support of a Church—he would use the expression alien Church since that was objected to—with which they were not in sympathy, the Established Church. Then they objected, and, he thought, very naturally, to what he might call the social aspect of the question; they objected to the ban of religious inequality and inferiority which rested upon them. The fact that 31 out of the 34 Welsh Members had been sent to the House to claim for the Welsh people a measure of religious equality was the strongest possible evidence of the genuineness and intensity of the feeling in the Principality in favour of the Bill. No doubt many subjects were discussed on Welsh platforms during the last General Election, but the question that above all others occupied the attention of the people was the question of Welsh Disestablishment. He had no hesitation in saying that while the Welsh people had returned the Welsh representatives to support Home Rule in the first place, they had returned them in the main to carry out their legitimate aspirations for a measure of Disestablishment. It was said that the State had no right to interfere with the property of the Church. Considerable use of the word "confiscation" had been made in the course of the Debate. But the following passage from Professor Freeman established beyond all doubt that the State had a full right to deal not only with the property of private individuals, but even with the property of the Church—

> "The State has the same power to deal with Church property which it has to deal with any other property, neither more nor less. Whenever the State deems that the rights, either of individuals or of Corporations, ought to give way to the general interest of the whole community, it has a right to decree that they shall give way to it. We talk of the sacredness of private property, and against everything else it is sacred, but against an Act of Parliament it has no sacredness at all. Every day we see private property confiscated for railways or public improvements of any kind."

They knew full well that under the scheme of Local Government for England and Wales passed by Parliament last year, so-called "confiscation" might take place in regard to the acquisition of private property for small holdings. But it was said by the opponents of the Bill that the Established Church was a Corporation. He thought the Home Secretary had satisfied them beyond all doubt that the Established Church was not a Corporation. Assuming, however, that they were dealing with the property of a Corporation, the opinion of Hallam would surely be respected on the subject. Writing in his *History of England*, chap ii., Hallam says:—

> "Corporate property appears to stand on a very different footing from that of parish individuals, and while all infringements of the established privileges of the latter are to be sedulously avoided, and held justifiable only by

the strongest motives of public expediency, we cannot but admit the full right of the Legislature to new-mould and regulate the former, in all that does not involve existing interests, upon far slighter reasons of convenience."

The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Sir E. Clarke) following the example of the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) had attributed the most unworthy—he might almost say the most diabolical—motives to the supporters of the Bill in Wales. But that was not the view of clergymen in Wales, who, unlike the hon. and learned Gentleman, knew something about the people of Wales and their motives. Archdeacon Howell of Wrexham, one of the most respected of the Church dignitaries, in a sermon at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on Sunday, January 26th, 1890, said :—

"There was the unquestionable fact that the majority of the people were not found within the pale of the Church in Wales. There was the equally unquestionable fact that her adherents were largely made up of English settlers and Anglicised Welshmen—not of the Welsh-speaking masses, who held the future of the Principality in their hands. The weakness of the Church in Wales was due to the fact that so much of the best blood of the nation no longer ran in her veins. It was sheer folly to hide from themselves the truth that the most vigorous life of the Welsh people no longer welled forth from the heart of the Welsh Church. And it must not be forgotten that the majority outside the Church were not passive or indifferent, but were banded together for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church. They were men of unquestionable religious character, whose lives bore witness to their piety and sincerity."

Again, Canon Thompson of Cardiff, speaking in the Lower House of Convocation, said :—

"If Members of the House had been present at meetings of Disestablishers as he had been in the course of his somewhat long Ministry, they would know that while certain political subjects such as Home Rule, roused a Welsh audience to a high pitch of enthusiasm, when the question of the Disestablishment of the Church came to be discussed the whole assembly was brought to a pitch of white-heat enthusiasm. They must remember that among the number of those banded against the Church in this matter was a very large number of deeply religious and deeply conscientious people. They would gain nothing by using hard or even questionable language. Those men were the heirs of Nonconformist fathers, who believed that any union or connection between Church and State was opposed to the laws of Scripture and the will of God."

With reference to the question of a religious census, he agreed most fully with the hon. and learned Member for Mid Glamorgan that the only fair test of a religious census was the test of Church membership. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had made a statement that night which they ought not to allow to pass without some comment. He said, for instance, that the people who were not classed as belonging to any religious community in Wales should be placed in the category of members of the Church. He did not know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman would say of the people of Scotland that all those who did not attend any particular place of worship should be classed as members of the Established Church or of the Free Church of Scotland. He did not know on what principle the hon. and learned Gentleman drew his deduction. The overwhelming majority of the Welsh people were Nonconformists, but the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested that where they were not communicants of the Church or members of any particular denomination, they should be classed as members of the Church of England merely because the Church of England was the national Church. During the last few days he had, he frankly admitted, received many petitions from his constituency against this measure. He had looked through them, he was acquainted with the districts from whence they emanated, and from his own knowledge he could say that scores of Nonconformists were persuaded to sign the petitions, under altogether false pretences. Many of the petitions, from each district bore the name of the Vicar, his wife, children, and servants ; then came the gardener and a number of old women who, at Christmas and other seasons in time past, had been the recipients of a good deal of charity and benevolence, and who were thus induced to append their signatures to the documents. Did hon. Gentlemen consider it right, or even honest, to persuade people to attach their names to petitions in such circumstances? He ventured to say that more than half the people who had so signed would record their votes at the next elections as they did at the last, in favour of this measure. He had been told by many of the signatories that they had attached their names at the earnest solicitation of the parson. That was the system by which it was sought to work up opposition to this measure. For his own part he should be glad if some method of a private character could be devised, and which could be relied upon, which would give the actual opinion of the Welsh people on this question. They had heard a good deal about the question of the resident minister, and he should like to refer to a letter which had appeared in one of the Birmingham newspapers, which was signed by the writer. This gentleman wrote :—

> "I have a farm near my native home, in a parish in Pembrokeshire (Llandeilo.) It is not certain that a Churchman ever lived in that parish, and the church has been in ruins for the last 50 years. Llangolman is the next parish to it. The ruins of the church there have been restored ; but seldom, if ever, can any religious service be held there, for no one, except the parson and the clerk, would attend. Maenclochog parish joins on the other side, where there is a considerable village. The church there also has been restored, and regular services are now held in it (composed of a few English strangers), after having been held only occasionally for many years. These three livings are in possession of one "parson." His dilapidated rectory house has also been lately rebuilt, as well as many other parsonages in the surrounding parishes, under the direction (it seems) of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Hence they are now ripe and ready for Disestablishment. There are four large and noble Nonconformist chapels in these parishes, well filled with worshippers, supporting the ministers of their own choice. Under the new Act I (who am a Nonconformist minister) have now to collect the tithes of my farm there for the 'parson' who lives in the locality, and is so over-worked that he has no time to collect them himself, as he used to do. He reminds me periodically (through his solicitor) of my legal obligation, and demands his 'pound of flesh,' with the alternative of legal proceedings. This is a true type and specimen of all the rural parish churches of my native country for ages. All the Established Churches that hold their own in Wales are those in towns, ironworks, and watering-places, where they are greatly dependent upon the voluntary system."

That letter was signed by a Mr. Maurice Morgan, who was a Nonconformist minister. Even in face of such a condition of things as that they heard hon. Gentlemen opposite say that the poor would suffer if the Church was Disestablished. He undertook to say that if hon. Gentlemen visited the rural districts of Wales and saw how things really were for themselves, they would not repeat such statements. He declared, without the slightest hesitation, that he was opposed to the existence of Establishment everywhere. The conditions of England were, however, quite different from those of Wales. When there was the same overwhelming demand for Disestablishment in England that there was in Wales it would be the bounden and constitutional duty of Parliament to give effect to it. In England the Church had held her own against Nonconformity, but in Wales that rivalry had not been a noble one, in the sense that for the last hundred years had had all the advantages on her side, but had left Wales a vast Nonconformity community. Did those who had spoken so much of the growth of the Church in Wales really believe that alliance with the State could alone save them ? He believed, on the contrary, that Disestablishment would strengthen the Church, would give her more vitality, and that the voluntary principle would bind her adherents together more closely. This measure, expedient as it undoubtedly was, and equitable as its principles were, would, if passed, remove a great injustice and would bring contentment to the most loyal and law-abiding portion of the Kingdom.

*MR. R. C. JEBB (Cambridge University) said, that in a Debate of this importance and complex character, especially when it had been somewhat prolonged, and when a great number of special points had been raised, a moment sometimes arrived when it was well to revert to some of the broader issues raised by the measure before the House. He would, therefore, ask permission to state, as concisely as he could, one or two of the general grounds upon which he would vote against the Second Reading. In the Debate on the First Reading, his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce) had said that every argument which the Government had used in support of the Bill had been an argument confined in its application to the case of Wales. "In its application," no doubt, but was that application immediate or ulterior ? On that point they were enlightened by the hon. Member for Leeds, who said that he would not object to see the principle applied more widely by instalments, and that, having won the cause of Disestablishment for the four dioceses of Wales, one would next be reconciled to the proposal to apply the same principle to the dioceses of the northern Province of England. What was that principle ? It was simply that the question of Disestablishment and Disendowment was to be determined by a majority of the Parliamentary representatives for the corresponding area. If they took any diocese or dioceses in England, the test would then be the Parliamentary representation for the corresponding area. The principle of this Bill applied, then, to the Church of England at large. The first ground on which he resisted the Second Reading of this Bill was because it raised the whole vast question of the Disestablishment of the national Church, and it was a monstrous injustice that this principle should be determined by the votes of hon. Gentlemen representing Wales and Monmouthshire alone. This great national question should be referred to the whole electorate. The Government ought to go to the country and take the opinion of the country as a whole. But hon. Members from Wales claimed that Wales was entitled to separate treatment on the ground of a separate nationality. He felt that he was approaching a delicate question, but no word should fall from him to wound the susceptibilities of hon. Gentlemen from Wales. Having followed these Debates with great care, he thought that the word "nation" had been used in two different senses, and that for the purposes of the present argument it was of the highest importance to distinguish between them. "Nation," in its primary sense, referred to the origin of a people; it was equivalent to "race." No well-informed person would deny that Wales contained the elements of a separate nationality, and that the marks of a separate nationality belonged to the majority of persons who now inhabit Wales. Those marks were—descent from that ancient Celtic race who were the earliest inhabitants of this island, the history and the geographical conditions of Wales having contributed to preserve a continuous strain of British blood; a distinct character, and, to some extent, a distinct physical type; a language which, though not spoken by all who call themselves Welsh, was regarded by all with a just pride and affection; a considerable body of distinctive customs and traditions. The great Puritan poet of the Commonwealth had described the Welsh as "An old and haughty people, proud in arms;" though when he said "proud in arms," Milton probably did not contemplate such a warfare as was now being waged. But "nation" had also a political sense, relative to unity of government and allegiance; as, for example, when the High Court of Parliament was called "the great Council of the nation." It was in this sense that the Church was national, because it held a special relation to the State, not because its members were all, by descent, of one stock. But the argument from nationality, as used in these Debates, had implied that the Welsh were a separate nation, not only in the racial sense, but in the political sense also—that was to say, that they had a right to deal with an institution common to England and Wales as if its fate could be determined by Wales alone. This contention appeared to him to imply that Wales had already attained a separate autonomy, and that this House had become a federal Assembly. He would now touch on the argument drawn from the admitted fact that the Church in Wales was in a minority. It was stated, on the strength of official Returns, that the number of adherents of Nonconformity in Wales was 832,000 (though the number of members was only 382,000). As to the numerical strength of the Church of England, the only clear fact was the enormous discrepancy between the different estimates given by those who wished to disestablish and disendow it. The estimate given in 1892 by the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) was one-fourth of the population; while others put it at one-tenth, or even less. These discrepancies clearly proved that there did not exist any satisfactory basis for exact statements; and that was the strongest possible reason for an official religious census. The essential difference between an amateur and an official census could easily be illustrated. In December, 1886—the year before Mr. Gee's well-known census—a printed circular in the Welsh language, headed "Private and Confidential," and addressed to the elders or deacons of Chapels, came into the hands of a clergyman in Wales. It was given to him by another Churchman, who received it from a Nonconformist who disapproved of it. It requested that arrangements might be made to take a census of Church attendance on a particular day, the 19th of December. Of course, no notice was to be given, and the census was to be taken at the 11 o'clock service, when, in many parts of Wales, from distance and other causes, the attendance is often less than it is in the afternoon, both at Church and at Chapel. An official census, on the other hand, is not only public, but is subject to scrutiny. In 1891 a language census was taken in connection with the general census. In his Report the Registrar General said he had given explicit instructions as to the filling up of the columns by those who spoke Welsh only, or English only, or both languages; and yet there was abundant evidence that these instructions had been misunderstood or set at naught by a large number of Welshmen who could speak both languages and set themselves down as speaking Welsh only. A detailed examination was made of two parishes, one in Carnarvonshire and one in Merionethshire, and it was found that, although infants under two years of age were not to be included in the language section at all, of 138 babies under one year, 59 had been returned as speaking Welsh, and also 87 out of 147 between one and two years old. Thus it might be said that these 146 infants "lisped," if not "in numbers," at least in statistics. The Registrar General remarked that these facts furnished good grounds for regarding with suspicion the trustworthiness of the statistics given as to persons of riper years. At all events, they showed the difference between an official and an unofficial census. An official religious census was the only way of ascertaining the relative strength of different denominations in Wales. Further, there was this fallacy in the minority argument. The good done by the Church in Wales was not limited to its own fold. It was admitted that Nonconformists, being hard pressed to maintain their organisations, had less to spare for the poor; and it was indisputable that the present position of the Church enabled her to assist the poor where help was most urgently needed. Then the precedent of the Irish Church was alleged; but that Church had an ecclesiastical organisation distinct from that of the Church of England.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): It was the United Church of England and Ireland.

*Mr. JEBB said that, as an establishment, it was united with the English Church by the Act of Union in 1800; but the relation of the four Welsh dioceses with the English Church was wholly independent of the action of Parliament, and this Bill was the first Bill by which it had been proposed to deal with the relations between the Welsh dioceses and the rest of the English Church. The Irish Church was disestablished as a whole, and provision, far more generous than that in this Welsh Bill, was made for her corporate life after Disestablishment. The Irish parallel was constantly adduced as if it was necessary to prove that Parliament had the power to disestablish and disendow the Church in Wales. Of course, it had the power to do so. What it was necessary to prove was that Parliament was morally justified in doing so. No Act of Parliament could prove a moral right to do anything. The thing done in 1869 was far from being identical with the thing it was proposed to do in 1895—the two things were distinctly different in many material circumstances and conditions. Before he passed from this topic he could not refrain from referring to a quotation made by the Solicitor-General that afternoon from the Archbishop of Dublin. The hon. and learned Gentleman maintained that the Archbishop of Dublin had admitted that the Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland was a good thing, because the Archbishop had said that it had been overruled for good.

*Sir FRANK LOCKWOOD: I quoted the extract to show that it was not regarded as a national sin.

*Mr. JEBB replied that there was nothing in the words quoted to prove that the Archbishop did not think that the Disestablishment of the Church was originally an evil: the very word "overruled" implied an evil. That, then, was the first broad ground on which he resisted the Second Reading of the Bill—that it affirmed a principle which ought to be referred to the country at large before the measure was adopted. His second ground of resistance was that the Bill not only affirmed a principle ultimately applicable to the Church of England at large, but it inflicted by its immediate operation, from the day it was passed, a grievous injury on the Church of England as a whole as well as on the Church in Wales, because it placed an integral portion of the Church of England under laws different from those which governed the rest of the Church. That was to say, it dealt not only with the relations of the Church in Wales with the Church of England and with the temporalities of the Church in Wales, but it also interfered with the proper ecclesiastical organisation of the Church of England as a whole. It destroyed that unity of organisation which the Church of England had hitherto possessed, and it made it impossible for the Church ever to recover that unity until, at any rate, the process of Disestablishment and Disendowment had been applied to the whole of England, and applied, too, under conditions identical with those under which it was to be applied in Wales. Under the 14th clause of the Bill the Bishops and the clergy of Wales were to cease to sit or be represented in the Houses of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. Revolutionary as he believed the measure to be in many other respects, it was revolutionary in this also—that it was absolutely the first example of an attempted interference by Parliament with Convocation, a separate constitutional body of high antiquity. His third ground of objection was, that the Bill wounded the Church in Wales in that character which was common to all Churches, whether Established or Voluntary. A Church was a religious body charged with certain work which it was bound to do. For that work temporal means were required. The question was: "Had the Church in Wales more money than was needed for its work?" Let them look at the great Coalfield of South Wales. Between 1850 and 1894 extraordinary progress had been made in that region in spite of great difficulties. That progress had been possible mainly because the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had helped the Church from their common fund, and had facilitated the sub-division of over-large parishes, while the Llandaff Diocesan Church Extension Society had raised and distributed large sums of money. But, notwithstanding this progress, the present ministrations of the Church in that district were by no means adequate; they required to be doubled in order to cope fully with the work to be done. Was this a moment, then, to cripple the resources of the Church, not because she was now inactive, but because long years ago she had shared a torpor not confined to Wales? A singular argument for taking away the Endowments of the Church had been advanced by the Secretary for Scotland and others, namely, that it was just to take away those gifts of private donors to the Church which were made before the Reformation, because at that time there was only one Church in England, and therefore those gifts might be regarded as made to the whole community. If it was put forward to show that those gifts should be distributed equally among all the different denominations now existing, he would consider the argument unsound, but he could at least have understood it. But he failed altogether to see its bearing if it was adduced to show that it was right to divert those Endowments from religious purposes entirely, and apply them to purposes which, though good in themselves, were essentially secular, not in the proper sense religious. "Religious equality" was a phrase which had been much used in this Debate. A breach of such equality was sometimes alleged to be caused by the mere status of Establishment—by those relations of the Church to the State which were at one moment described as enviable privileges, and at the next as degrading fetters. But a wholly distinct idea was also associated with the phrase, and was perhaps more prominent in the minds of some hon. Gentlemen opposite. Thus the hon. Member for East Carmarthenshire had said—

> "What we want is religious equality. Of two farmers' sons, why should one be looked up to, and the other looked down upon, by the neighbours, because the first goes to Church, and the second to a Nonconformist Chapel?"

Another hon. Member spoke of the hallmark of the clergyman. If he did not misapprehend the drift of these observations, the expression, religious equality, as here used, referred to social equality. He deplored the fact that any thought of social consideration should enter into these matters. He did not blame those whom it offended. But he must point out that if they Disestablished and Disendowed the Church of England to-morrow they would not get rid of the social prestige of the Church, which depended only remotely on the *status* of the Establishment, and mainly and immediately on the unique history of the Anglican Church, on its antiquity and traditions. He had dwelt on the broad objections to the Bill in principle, and had not thus far spoken of its special provisions, but he could not refrain from pointing out that, besides those features in the special provisions which appeared to many of them harsh and illiberal, there were, in the opinion of some lawyers, at all events, many ambiguities. They would hear more of these in Committee, if the Bill ever reached that stage. In Clause 6, Section 2, the important question of the bearing of the Bill on the marriage law was raised. When the Churches had been transferred, would it be possible to have banns proclaimed in Church? Could a marriage take place on certificate of banns? Could a Bishop give a marriage licence, and could a marriage take place on a Bishop's licence? The legal authorities he referred to said, apparently not, because under Clause 1 all the Statutes which had hitherto governed the Church of England were repealed so far as Wales was concerned. But if that were so, then Church people must have recourse to the Civil Marriage Acts; a singular illustration of religious equality. Then, again, what was the bearing of Clause 14 on clergy discipline? As everyone knew, there were Bishops' Bishops' Courts before which clergymen charged with misconduct could be brought, and the Courts of the Archbishop were the Courts of Appeal. But Clause 1 seemed to repeal the Clergy Discipline Acts of 1840 and 1892, and if that was so the Bishops' Courts were gone. The Courts of the Archbishop, however, were saved by Clause 14, so that they would have their Courts of Appeal and no way of getting to them. Among the objections to the special provisions of the Bill, he could merely touch on some of the most prominent. First, the difficulty in the way of forming a central fund. Second, the assignment of Cathedrals. He had honestly tried to understand why the provision dealing with the latter subject had been put into the Bill, and had failed, unless it was that the promoters of the Bill foresaw the extreme indigence to which the measure would necessarily reduce the Church in Wales, so that Church people would have no funds available for the repair and maintenance of the Cathedrals. If that was so, was it not the strongest possible condemnation of the provisions for Disendowment? Churchmen had not only built and maintained the Cathedrals; they had spent great sums on restoration, enlargement and (at Llandaff) virtual rebuilding. Would it not have been equitable to have had the amount of these private benefactions estimated, and that amount refunded to the Church? Then, as to the churchyards, there appeared to be nothing in the Bill to prevent a Parish Council authorising inscriptions on the monuments, repugnant to Christian feeling, or putting a veto on religious services. As to the stipendiary curates, the only reason for not compensating them seemed to be that the Irish curates were too much compensated. Surely nothing would have been simpler than to name a date, after which, no one ordained, or taking employment, as a curate in Wales should be entitled to compensation. But thus to turn the Welsh curates adrift without any compensation was most cruel and oppressive. He objected, then, to this Bill on three broad grounds. First, it prejudged at the behest of a section of the electorate a great national issue which should be referred to the whole electorate. Secondly, not only did it do this, but it inflicted an immediate and enormous injury, not only on the Church in Wales, but on the Church of England as a whole, by interfering with its ecclesiastical unity. Thirdly, it dealt a blow at that Christian work which every Church as such—that is to say, as a religious body—was bound to carry forward. There were cases in which the actual mischief resulting from an injustice—large though the mischief be—was a less evil than the evil of the example. An English poet said—

> "The greatest gift a hero leaves his race
> Is to have been a hero;"

and there were cases in which the converse might be true. This Bill, if it ever became law, would, he believed, be a calamity to our country, but worse than any mischief directly flowing from it; worse than the possible desecration of the Cathedrals built and maintained by the gifts of long generations of

Churchmen; worse than the possible injury to those sacred feelings which were associated with the resting-places of the dead; worse than that paralysis of charity and benevolence which must inevitably add to the burdens and the sufferings of the poor; worse than all this would be the record that a body of English statesmen had consented, under political pressure, to approve such a mode of dealing with the oldest, the greatest, and the most beneficent of English national institutions—that national Church which not Churchmen alone, but millions of those who dissented from it, recognised as a great bulwark of religious freedom—and had lent the sanction of their names and their eminent abilities to a grievous violation of elementary justice.

*Mr. H. J. ROBY (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles) remarked that it had been said that, with insignificant exceptions, the property of the Church in Wales was the gift of private donors, and that national property could only be understood to mean property legally or equitably contributed by the nation. These were different, but connected matters. There might be national property although given by private donors. It had been said, truly, that the principal property of the Church, and especially of the Church of Wales, was tithe. Tithe rent-charge in Wales was about three-fourths of the whole property. Taking England and Wales together, according to the statistics given to Parliament a few years ago, the tithes were £3,000,000 out of £5,500,000. But they could not take only the present amount. In the course of ages, tithes had been commuted at different times for land, and, consequently, what originally sprung from tithes and represented tithes was not merely tithe rent-charge; there was other Church property which had the same origin. He did not think he should be far wrong if he assumed that two-thirds of the property was tithe, or arose from tithe. What was tithe? There had been in the minds of many, a great mistake arising from the changes that had taken place in this old institution. It could not be taken as it was since 1892, or since 1836, when tithe rent-charge was established in lieu of tithe. Until about the Fourth Century there was no tithe, but purely voluntary gifts. During the period from about the Fourth Century to about the Twelfth, tithe became gradually a customary gift to the Church, and by about 1200 A.D. it had become legally established as a common law right belonging to the parson of the parish. It was sometimes asked: When do you say that this Endowment by the State took place? He believed that the date was exactly when civil penalties were legally annexed for the recovery of tithe. As soon as that was done the payment of tithe ceased altogether to be voluntary; it became a tax. He did not think everybody always bore in mind what tithe was originally. It was the annual increase from the profits of land, from the growth of the animals and stock kept on the land, and from the personal industry of the artisans. In other words, it was neither more nor less than an income-tax—a tax of 10 per cent. on the income and the industry of the persons in the parish. And if anybody should say that an income tax did not bear about it the character of a State gift or State imposition, he should be very much surprised. Originally, a person discharged his tithes if he paid them to the Church in any of its aspects—to the Bishop, to the parson of the parish, or to the parson in another parish. There are instances of grants of tithe to religious houses; Lord Selborne has found only two of such grants to a parson. But all these are only appropriations of tithe to one among several parties to whom it might have been payable; and as Lord Selborne himself says:—

> "Such appropriation was a different matter from the sanction given, whether by the Ecclesiastical or by the Temporal Law, to the existing and generally recognised obligation to pay tithe."

Gradually, it came to be understood that the proper person to whom to pay tithe was the parson. The assumption of a grant to a particular person seemed to him to be an instance of what English lawyers were constantly doing; they could not understand custom giving rise to an enforceable right, and they always presumed and fancied the existence of a grant. Now, as there were about 9,000 parishes before the Reformation, if anybody liked to assume that there were 9,000 separate grants, it was a bold assumption. It was a bolder assumption still when it was remembered that much, perhaps two-thirds, of the land was not cultivated about 1200 A.D. at all. He went further, and said that when they considered what the tithe really was originally, that it was something charged, not on the land, but on the produce and personal earnings of the cultivators and artisans, it was simply impossible that there could have been such grants. There was no basis, as far as he could make out, to suppose anything of the kind ever did take place. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir M. E. Hicks-Beach) read a passage from a work of Professor Freeman, namely—

> "The Church preached the payment of tithe as a duty. The State gradually came to enforce that duty by legal enactment."

[*The hon. Gentleman read from a newspaper, and there were, in consequence, cries of* " Order, order ! "]

> " The State gradually came to enforce that duty by legal enactment."

[*Renewed cries of* " Order ! "] What is the matter ? [*Cries of* " Newspaper ! "]

*MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members are alluding to the fact that the hon. Gentleman is reading from a newspaper. It would be as well if the hon. Gentleman compressed the newspaper into as small a compass as possible.

*MR. ROBY apologised if he had committed any breach of Order. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, when he read this extract, met with cheers from the Government side of the House, to which he immediately replied as follows :—

> " But is every source of income, the payment of which is enforced by legal enactment, therefore, the property of the State ? "

He thought that if the right hon. Gentleman would think for a moment he would admit that tithe was not property at all until the person to whom it was payable was fixed and the State, through the Courts of Law [Sir M. E. HICKS-BEACH : " The Ecclesiastical Courts "] enforced the actual payment of that tithe by civil process. It was perfectly true the Courts were Ecclesiastical Courts, but were not the Ecclesiastical Courts the King's Courts ? Were they not Courts of England, which were intended to deal with a particular class of matters, including such questions as marriage and wills ? And is not the Common Law which rests upon the decisions of the Courts as much law as that made by Statute ? Tithe amounted to about two-thirds of the whole property of the Church ; but there was some other property. There was land. He did not know the exact history of the landed property of the Church, but he imagined that a good deal of the land, apart, perhaps, from the glebe, which the Church held was land which had belonged to religious houses. As soon as any property was given to a monastery, whether it had belonged to a Church or not, it ceased to belong, if it ever had belonged, to the Church. This is clearly recognised by Mr. Brewer in his Defence of the Church of England. Again, a gift by a King in former days was a totally different thing to a gift which Her Majesty might make out of her private purse now. The King made such gifts as the chief organ of the State, and they were State grants. He believed there was exceedingly little beyond the churches, houses, and glebe lands which were private gifts, and those private gifts, except some of the glebe, were preserved by the Bill. Before passing to the purpose for which tithe was granted he would like to say that the curious and technical terms in which Lord Selborne had handled this question seemed to presume a state of things which existed now, but did not exist then. He says :—

> " Tithes never entered into and were never granted out of the general public revenue."

But it is only, he believed, since Charles II. that the Consolidated Fund was established, and that taxes were thus paid into a general fund, and paid out of it to particular objects. It was the practice in old days to raise taxes for special purposes. And the only difference in the cases of tithe was, that it was left to be collected by the persons whose services were to be remunerated by it. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol had referred to a case in which a private person, in 1640, executed a deed purporting to create and endow a vicarage, and read out the curse which was to fall upon anyone who interfered with his gift. He found that this particular property had been the property of the Knights Hospitallers of Jerusalem, and that on their being suppressed this private person, Barlow, or his ancestors, had obtained it and had granted it to the purpose indicated. It was, in his hands, mere secular property, and he gave it, according to this document, to that Church just as he might give anything else. He thought the words of the curse read out by the right hon. Baronet were a common form so far as he could make out, and he would take the liberty of hoping that this gentleman, when he endowed the Church service for Almighty God, only used the words his conveyance put into his mouth, and did not accompany the gift to God and his Church with a curse. The second argument he wished to deal with in regard to the property of the Church was that of the purpose for which it was given. It was for maintaining the religious services of the whole people under the control of an authority recognised by the people. The services were co-extensive with the nation; and here they met with the reason why there was a greater right, a greater justification, for dealing with the property given to the Church than with that given to Dissenters. The Endowments of the Church from first to last were given to the Church when it was co-extensive with the State. The Endowments of the Dissenters were given distinctly to a section, and he thought the difference between taking what was meant for all and applying it now to purposes which should be for the benefit of all, and taking what was given to a sect and applying it to the benefit of everybody, would be tolerably obvious. All property that was given to the Church had been given to it in its character of the National Church, and nothing could be more different than the Endowments of the Dissenters. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol asked him how far he would carry that down, he would say in theory it came down to the present time unquestionably. But no doubt if they came to deal with a question such as that dealt with in the Bill they must deal with it reasonably and in justice to all they ought to take the time, whenever they might fix it, perhaps the Toleration Act, when dissent was formally and properly recognised, so that it might really be said, when a person gave a thing to the Church, he gave it knowing it to be a Church not co-extensive with the nation. His third argument was that the whole history of the Church went to show that the property with which they were dealing was national. Public Acts of Parliament had regulated the rights of the Church; the head of the State was the head of the Church, its superior officers had seats in the other House; its inferior officers were treated as Public Officials for public purposes, such as the celebration of marriages, and Church buildings were regularly used for the publication of notices of events affecting localities. Then the rights and duties of the Church were the subjects of decisions in special Courts of the Realm established for the purpose. The whole institution was therefore about as national as it well could be. The supporters of this Bill had to prove two things—first, that the property dealt with could be fairly called national property; and, in the second place, that it was right to remove that property from the body that now managed it. He admitted that it was more difficult to prove the latter than the former, but his own opinion was that no Established Church could be maintained in these days in a country where it could not be said that a majority, or even a large majority, of the inhabitants were in its favour. He was not one of those who advocated the passing of this measure for Wales with the idea of advocating the passing of a similar measure for England. In England the majority of the people were not in favour of Disestablishment, but after the experience of the last four elections in Wales there could be no doubt that the people of that country were in favour of it in overwhelming numbers. He could not deny these facts, though he was not sure that he was glad of them. Many of his friends were members of the English Church: many whom he had had the honour to know, and to love, had held high dignities in that Church. He had been accustomed to it all his life, and he was very far from having the smallest desire to see it injured in any way. But this was a case of justice. He might love his friends, but he was bound to love truth and justice more. This was a matter of the just demands of the people of Wales; and when he heard hon. Members talk of its being a crime and a sin, and a robbery of God, he felt that such language was worse than absurd. Robbery of God seemed to him to imply a tribal or national God, not the Creator and Governor of the whole earth. Such strong language would not do much good in that Debate. He was bound to consider whether, in taking away the Endowments of the Church, they were destroying its usefulness. He did not believe they were. A Church was a spiritual body. Its worldly possessions, its worldly rank, were not its real treasures; and if, by giving up some of its worldly rank and possessions, it could gain more favour in the eyes of those among whom it had to minister, it was making a good sacrifice. The real gifts and the real treasures of the Church were the teaching of its Founder, its high purpose, purity of life, and infinite love of one's neighbour. If he were told that the deduction of this small sum from a Church which, in some senses was rightly described as a part of the Church of England, one of the wealthiest churches in the world when you look to the wealth of its members—if he were told that this deduction, which would make an additional call upon their love of religion, and of the people, would really harm the Church, he must honestly say he did not think they appreciated the hearty feeling of devotion of the members of the Church, and he was sure they did not appreciate the real purpose of a spiritual body like that. No doubt the Church would be exposed to some difficulties; it might have temporarily some struggles, but its difficulties and struggles would give it real life and force and vigour. He did not believe that if the Church were left to voluntary effort it could not maintain its ministers and deal with its people in even a better way than had been done by those Welsh agencies which had covered the face of Wales with their Churches. If the poor had been able to do it in the day of trouble and affliction could not the rich do it when they had benefited so long by the exclusive enjoyment of what was really intended for all?

Debate further adjourned till to-morrow.

## CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

On the Order for the Third Reading of this Bill,

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, the Bill provided for the transfer to the Government Departments of the large sum of £11,000,000 sterling, and he observed that the Preamble stated that that money was "cheerfully" granted to Her Majesty for the different Services. As an Irish Member he did not "cheerfully" grant this money, because he considered that the granting of it embodied a certain amount of wrong to his country. As an Irish Member he looked with great regret on this large sum of money being spent in the way it was spent. He was not disposed to be grateful to Her Majesty's Government for such a small grant as £35,000. He considered the sum too small to be thankful for. Generally, when money was voted for Ireland he had supported it and said "thank you," even to Governments which he might have been opposing, but when it came to a miserable sum of £35,000 to relieve such a large amount of distress, he was afraid he could not bring himself to thank the Government for the very small mercy extended to them. He believed that about £9,000,000 was annually collected in Ireland, and out of this £11,000,000 Ireland paid £1,100,000, and this was when they wanted their money at home. Under the circumstances he thought they were entitled to raise some objection. There was a large increase last year in the Navy Estimates, a large increase this year, and there was every probability that there would be a large increase next year, and for four or five years to come. He must say that in Ireland they got very little out of it. Except Cork, there was no town in Ireland which was in the slightest degree fortified against the attack of any foreign naval power. They were not protected in Ireland. He did not know that any country would select Ireland as a point of attack, or attempt to ravage its coasts. He thought if not England, it would be the Colonies which would be attacked; therefore, Ireland was not likely to get much benefit from this expenditure. In England, however, it was different. Employment was provided for an immense number of labourers and artisans, and the money was transferred from the pockets of the taxpayers to that of the workmen. Nothing of the kind took place in Ireland. He further argued that the taxation had been specially increased in Ireland last year, which was an additional reason why he should protest against the great expenditure of this year. This attitude he was constrained to adopt until something was done in Ireland, either to build dockyards for the construction of ships or manufactories for stores. He indicated that Cork or Galway would be suitable places, and either of them would be probably better situated than some of the present dockyard sites in this country. For the past century or two it had been the policy of this country to do nothing for Ireland in this respect, though it was recognised that Ireland contributed a great deal towards the Exchequer. In his judgment the policy of concentrating the manufacture of warlike stores in England was most detrimental to the industrial prospects of Ireland.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON agreed with the hon. Member so far that he hoped a considerable portion of this £11,000,000 to be spent on the Navy would be expended in Ireland. If there was any shipbuilding establishment in the world which was entitled to receive some money of the British Government for Naval purposes he ventured to say that it was the firm of Harland and Wolff, who had done so much for the maintenance of British prestige in all quarters of the world. He commended to Her Majesty's Government the desirability of expending some of the money in Belfast, where the work would be done as well as it could possibly be done in any part of the United Kingdom. He did not agree at all with the hon. and gallant Member that Ireland did not appreciate the Navy. At all events they did so in Ulster and the North of Ireland.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said, that the late Prime Minister promised that he would consider the advisability of establishing a Board of Agriculture for Ireland, but although he had several times asked questions on the subject lately, not the slightest notice had been taken of them.

*Mr. SPEAKER : I do not think that comes within the Estimates included in this Bill.

Mr. FIELD said, there were, perhaps, other things that did come under those Estimates. The expenditure for war material in Ireland was quite inadequate. The Navy contracts, at all events, did come under this Bill, though it was very difficult to know what the Bill did cover. It was drawn in such a way that it was impossible, unless one was an old hand, to know what it did cover and what it did not. He declared as an Irish Member that Irishmen did not obtain anything like a just share of the Naval and Military expenditure covered by the Bill, and he desired to enter his emphatic protest against that. Taxation was never felt so much by a population where the money returned directly through the medium of the working classes; but nearly all the taxation levied in Ireland was expended in England or Scotland.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.) desired to enter his strong protest against the very unfair treatment accorded by the Admiralty to Haulbowline, their only Irish dockyard. Since the present Government came into Office, Naval expenditure had increased by 4½ millions, and enormous sums had been, and were about to be, expended in British dockyards, while Haulbowline had not received a penny.

*Mr. SPEAKER : Order, order! The Bill deals not with works, but with wages and men.

Captain DONELAN said he would enter a protest against the uncalled for cruel and wanton dismissal of Irish workmen from Haulbowline during the past winter, when severe distress prevailed at Queenstown, without any notice, practically, having been given to the unfortunate men. He had appealed in vain to the Civil Lord of the Admiralty to remedy this grievance.

*Mr. SPEAKER : Order, order! This is quite irregular. The remarks of the hon. Gentleman have no reference to the subject of the Bill.

Bill read 3°.

## ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

*Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that the Inspector General of Recruiting drew attention in his report to the difficulties which arose in recruiting from the strict limitation of the number of the regular forces, and declared that the restriction led to the rejection of many eligible recruits who presented themselves for enlistment during those portions of the year when the Army was full. They were, therefore, sacrificing the interests of the Army for what was now a mere punctilio. The Army Bill itself, in its recital, gave the number of the Army at 155,403 men. That was never to be exceeded, and, therefore, at the portion of the year referred to, recruiting had to be stopped, not because there would be too many on the establishment for the whole year, but only because that would be so for a short time. The Government ought not to allow the Army Bill to pass without doing something to extend the limits of the Army, so that recruiting might be carried on at a time when the best class of recruits were ready to enter the Army. He suggested the desirability of adding some further exceptions, such limitation as this at the end of line 13, where the troops serving in India were excluded from the enumeration, which would allow a little more latitude. Another way of accomplishing this object would be to make an exception with regard to men of less than six months service. Having had such a short training they could not add to the effective strength of the Army, and if this suggestion were adopted they could, without any violation of the substance of the Mutiny Act, get rid of the difficulty which restricted the entry of the best class of recruits into the British Army.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) observed that the hon. Gentleman was more royalist than the King, and he was anxious that the War Office should have facilities which they did not really desire themselves. The present system gave them sufficient elasticity even at the critical time of the year to which the hon. Member referred. There would, no doubt, be a greater elasticity if the restriction were removed altogether. This restriction, however, did not arise from the Army Bill, but from the general law, which enabled the Auditor General to intervene if they exceeded a certain number of men. Having every desire to have all possible latitude in that respect, they had not found it necessary to apply to Parliament for any alteration of the law.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) did not rise to oppose the Second Reading. There were not any material alterations in the Bill, and, therefore, the Government ought, under the circumstances to have the Second Reading. He wished, however, to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the desirability of giving them time to discuss certain Amendments in Committee.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Are they the same old Amendments as we had last year?

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Some of them are.

Bill read 2°.

## RULE OF THE ROAD AT SEA

Order read for resuming the Debate on Amendment proposed to Question (27th February, 13th March)—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the objections which have been raised to the adoption by Order in Council of Rule 15 of the Revised International Regulations for preventing collisions at sea, dealing with sound signals in fog, as suggested by the Washington Conference, and considered by the Maritime Powers."—(*Sir Donald Currie.*)

*Mr. W. E. M. Tomlinson.*

And which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'raised,' in line 2, to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'Order in Council of the 30th day of January, 1893, relative to the fixing and screening of ships' lights, and to the adoption by Order in Council of the sound signals prescribed by Article 15 and Article 28 of the Revised Regulations for preventing Collision at Sea, as set forth in the Board of Trade Circular to Shipowners of 6th March, 1894.'"—(*Mr. T. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, that he was glad to be able now to ask the House for leave to withdraw his Amendment. He had consulted his friends in Liverpool, and, while they had made certain suggestions, they had left the matter to his discretion. As the President of the Board of Trade had given way in the matter, he wished to meet him in the same conciliatory spirit, and he therefore asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. S. WILLIAMSON (Kilmarnock Burghs) proposed, as an Amendment, to add to the Motion, the words following—

"Including any objections which may be taken to that rule, having regard to the sound signals prescribed by Rule 28."

Amendment agreed to.

Motion, as thus amended, agreed to.

The House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, 26th March 1895.*

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## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order), and dispensed with for this day's sitting.

## CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 1) BILL.

Read $1^a$: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with) Bill read $2^a$; Committee negatived; Bill read $3^a$, and passed.

## EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.—[H.L.]

## EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES (No. 2) BILL.—[H.L.]

House in Committee (according to Order): Bills reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

## CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1879, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read $3^a$ (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

## ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS (SCHEME FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF HANBURY'S CHARITY, CHURCH LANGTON, LEICESTER).

VISCOUNT CROSS rose to move :—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her consent from all that part of the scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the Foundation known as Hanbury's Charity which is contained in the following words of the thirty-fourth section: 'In accordance with the principles of the Christian faith, and, in the case of children whose parents so desire.'"

He said, it was a pleasure to say that he was not going to oppose the whole scheme, but only a certain portion of it. The House might, perhaps, be somewhat astonished at the words of the Motion, but of course, he had not the remotest wish to prevent the teaching of the Christian faith, but when the scheme was looked at, the House would see how the words applied. The scheme contained these words :—

> "Subject to the provisions of this scheme, religious instruction in accordance with the principles of the Christian faith, and in the case of children whose parents so desire, in accordance with the doctrines of the Church of England, shall be given in the schools under such regulations as shall be made from time to time by the governors."

If he had his own way, the scheme would then run thus :—

> "Subject to the provisions of this section, religious instruction in accordance with the doctrine of the Church of England shall be given in the schools. . . ."

This was the only point which he desired to bring before their Lordships' attention. The Foundation was started by the Rev. William Hanbury, who lived about the middle of last century. He was very much given to gardening and forestry, and he made large gardens and plantations, one of his objects being to employ the money which he might make therefrom in benefiting the Church of England. From a book which he published in 1767, there could be no doubt about his firm and absolute attachment to the Church of England in every form and shape. He did not quite succeed in getting the money which he wanted for the elaborate plan which he had before him, but he had described in the indentures which he executed, how he would devote the money from beginning to end. With the first money which he got, he built an organ in his Church. The schools he did not manage to build for some time, and these were not founded till after his death. He, however, executed trust deeds which clearly proved that he meant these to be Church of England schools and nothing else. It was for this reason that their Lordships were now asked to consider the present Motion. By the original deed, a school was to be built at Church Langton, the boys in which were to

> "meet every Sunday morning to follow the master to Church from the school, two by two, in decent and comely order, and to sit in the galleries provided on each side of the organ, and sing psalms with the same."

The organist was to

> "attend divine service regularly every Sunday, and instruct the children twice a week in psalmody."

Besides this, he was to

> "instruct the children three times a week in psalmody, or oftener, if the trustees see occasion; to learn them to chant the psalms."

which chanting, Mr. Hanbury was desirous should ever be used in the Church. He was to teach them

> "to sing anthems, that there may be always an anthem by one or more voices after the third Collect for ever."

He had, therefore, the benefit of the Church at heart, and wished that the boys should be brought up in accordance with the teaching of the Church of England. The noble Lord opposite might suggest that there was nothing in that deed to come within the Act of 1869. He could not help thinking, however, that the Charity Commissioners, when they had the plan before them, omitted to place reliance on one clause in the indenture, because that clause referred them distinctly, in so many words, to an additional deed which incorporated the original deed with the indenture. The additional indenture and deed were called the final and explanatory deed. Turning to the latter, they would find the following clause:—

> "And it is upon this further trust and confidence, that the trustees augment the school at Langton for reading, writing, and accompaniments, and either enlarge it, or erect a separate school on purpose, for the training up such a set number of schoolmasters as may be sufficient to supply those set on foot in other parishes, by the deed called *Schools for Ever*. . . . by being trained up in a constant attendance on divine worship . . . . and well instructed in the grounds and principles of the Christian religion, they may be best qualified to answer the end of this institution."

In the deed "Schools for Ever," the masters were to put before the boys

> "the nature and horrid sin of schism, the better to keep them steadfast in the Faith and not be tossed about with every wind of doctrine by the craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

More express terms could hardly be used to show the clear intention of the founder, not merely to benefit the school of the particular parish of Church Langton, but also all the other parishes of Langton in this particular respect. He thought that the Charity Commissioners had not had the explanatory deed brought specially to their notice. He could quite understand that if the case stood only on the original deed, without the explanatory deed, it might be said—though even in the original deed he thought there was evidence that the founder meant the school to be a Church of England school—that the terms were not so express as to come within the words of the Act of Parliament. But the terms of the explanatory deed clearly showed, in his opinion, that the purpose of the donor was that the school should be a Church of England school, and that the children attending it should be instructed in the doctrines and discipline of that Church. This was the view which Vice Chancellor Kindersley took of the matter in 1863. The school had been worked on those principles to the satisfaction of everyone up to the present time, and he would put it to their Lordships, as a matter of policy, whether it would be wise, under the circumstances, to disturb the existing arrangement, and to act against what was evidently the intention of the founder. He begged to move the Motion that stood on the Paper in his name.

*LORD MONKSWELL said, he thought that the noble Viscount had taken a rather inconvenient course in bringing this matter before their Lordships, inasmuch as if the Charity Commissioners were wrong in their view of Section 19 of the Act of 1869 there was power of appeal for anyone to the Privy Council, who, being conversant with matters of pure law of this kind, were better able to deal with the question than their Lordships in that House, though, of course, their Lordships had the power to strike out of the scheme the words referred to in the Motion if they so determined. The Education Department, however, recognised the Charity Commissioners as the proper authority to draw up a scheme of this nature. It was their business to decide whether an endowment was, or was not, a Church endowment under Section 19 of the Act of 1869, and the Department was not at all inclined to interfere with the Charity Commissioners in such a matter, more particularly as they had had such cases from time to time fully under consideration. The noble Viscount seemed to think that the decision of Vice Chancellor Kindersley in 1864 had a very important bearing on the scheme at the present time. But in deciding on the scheme in 1864 Vice Chancellor Kindersley was in a totally different position from that now occupied by the Charity Commissioners, because in 1864 the Vice Chancellor had not the provision to which reference was made to guide him. That provision was not passed until 1869. The Vice Chancellor had then to take into consideration everything bearing on the matter, whether by implication, express terms, or otherwise, and to make the best interpretion he could of what might have been the intention of the testator; and it might be that their Lordships, taking everything into consideration, would come to the same conclusion as he did —that the balance of probability was that the testator intended the school to be a Church of England school. But the Act of 1869 entirely altered this state of things, and what the Charity Commissioners had to consider was a different matter. They had to consider whether this endowment was a Church endowment within the meaning of Section 19 of the Act of 1869, as amended by the Act of 1873, and those Acts required the use of express words to constitute such an endowment. When the testator executed this deed it was not at all uncommon for the founders of charitable trusts to insert in express words the desire that the school proposed to be founded should be a school in which the doctrines of the Church of England should be taught. But in this case the founder did nothing of the kind. In several places in the deed he mentioned the Christian religion and the subject of religious education, but he nowhere mentioned education according to the formularies of the Church of England, or of any particular Church. The object of the Act of 1869 was to widen the efficacy of charitable endowments, but the effect of the Motion would be to restrict them by not permitting provision to be made for the religious education of any Nonconformist child. The noble Viscount suggested that religious instruction must be given in the school according to the formularies of the Church of England or none at all. That the Act of 1869 put this trust in a totally different position from that which it previously occupied was clear from the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of the Shoreditch Parochial Schools, as delivered by Lord Selborne in 1884. Lord Selborne said—

> "It is impossible to read the 19th section of the Act of 1869 without being struck by the care and anxiety which the Legislature has exhibited there to prevent denominational restrictions from being applied to any school, or to which there was not demonstrative evidence that the original founders of the school had not only formed, but expressed, an intention that the children should be instructed according to the doctrines or formularies of a particular Church, sect, or denomination, or, in the added words of the later Act, should be members of a particular Church, sect, or denomination. It is impossible not to be struck by the anxiety which the Legislature has displayed to exclude not only every uncertain, but also every nearly probable implication from practice alone of such an intention; for it is required, first of all, that the denominational purposes should be manifested by the express terms, either of the original instrument of foundation, or of some other Statutes or Regulations. . . . The Legislature, by requiring 'express terms,' going for the present no further, has manifested a clear intention to exclude mere implication."

The noble Viscount seemed to think that the explanatory deed could not have been laid before the Charity Commissioners, as if they had formulated the scheme without taking the trouble to examine an important document in the case. But the Commissioners had this deed before them, and in that, as in all other documents relating to the trust, they found that nothing had been said about teaching the formularies of the Church of England. What the Charity Commissioners said was this —and the point might be tested before the Privy Council—that under the Act of Parliament there must be express terms referring to the formularies of a particular Church, and in the deeds in question nothing of the sort was to be found. Therefore, whatever might have been the intention of the testator in this instance—and he did not deny that the testator probably intended the school to be a Church of England school—the Act of 1869 absolutely barred the way, because there was an absence in the deeds of the necessary express terms. He wished to refer to one point. In cases of this kind, in which it was probable that the testator, a clergyman of the Church of England, intended to found a school in connection with that Church, but in which the express terms of the Act of 1869 prevented the endowment being treated as a Church endowment, the Charity Commissioners took this course—they inserted a special clause, which was to be found in this scheme, enabling any child whose parents desired him to be taught in the formularies of the Church of England to be so taught, and the only effect of striking out the words objected to by the noble Viscount would be to prevent Nonconformist children from securing any similar religious instruction in this school. The clause was one which had been found to work well, and was generally known as the Sir James Hill compromise, and he hoped their Lordships would not strike the words out.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that if the noble Lord was arguing in favour of the Nonconformist denomination he could congratulate him upon having used casuistry which would have been worthy of a totally different school of theology, and Suasez or Escobar would not have interpreted the matter with which he had dealt in a more subtle or startling fashion. The Act of Parliament said that the scheme was excepted from the foregoing provision if it related to any educational endowment, the scholars educated by which were, in the opinion of the Commissioners, required by the express terms of the original instruction of the Foundation or of the Statutes, to learn, or to be instructed according to the doctrines or formularies of any particular Church, sect, or denomination. There was another very important provision in the Act, which was that either House of Parliament had the power of arresting any scheme which in their opinion it was not expedient should pass. Obviously, when such a saving clause as that was introduced into an Act, it was not necessary to watch so carefully over the meaning of the words. What was reqnired? In the first place the children were to

> "meet at the school every Sunday morning, and also again after dinner, to follow him to Church, two by two."

What did the noble Lord suppose they were taught at Church? The doctrines of the Church itself, or of some other Church? That the Church of England was meant was shown by the fact that further on it was said that the organist should

> "learn them, or such of them as have the best ears and voices to sing anthems, that there may be always an anthem, by one or more voices, after the third Collect, forever."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Earl of KIMBERLEY): That is the additional deed, is it not?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, it was the original one. In the additional deed the schoolmaster was directed to lay before the children "the nature and horrid sin of schism." Did the noble Lord think it was Mahommedanism or Buddhism that was referred to when the founder said the schoolmaster should enforce upon the children "the duty of unity in the Church?" What could it mean but the doctrines, the formularies of the Church of England? The deed continued to say,

> "the better to keep them steadfast in the faith, and not to be tossed about with every wind of doctrine by the craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive."

In another Foundation they found a still further indication of the meaning of the founder. In reference to the printing office which he established at the same, time he said—

> "The deed of trust . . . after requiring such works to be printed as "Thomas à Kempis," "Taylor's Holy Living and Dying," and many other devotional works of a high standard of churchmanship, goes on 'to preserve the members of the Church from falling into the dreadful sin of schism, let there be dispersed 'Well Against the Dissenters,' and the best and useful compendious treatises, on sermons only, against the different sectaries.'"

This was not an ancient Foundation; the Foundation was in the middle of the last century, and the words showed as clearly as possible what the testator meant. There were express terms requiring the children to learn according to the doctrines of the Church of England, and the power of supervision given to the two Houses of Parliament would be absolutely useless if they did not interfere in this case to protect the schools and the foundations from the most extravagant interpretation which had been put upon them by the Charity Commissioners, not, he suspected, at their own instance, but under the tremendous pressure that was brought to bear upon them by the Council of Education.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HERSCHELL) said, when a similar Motion was made by the noble Viscount with reference to another school, he pointed out what appeared to be the then very strong objection to the matter being determined by the House, and not determined by the tribunal which the Statute constituted for the purpose. Since he made those observations his opinion had been strongly confirmed, because he had learnt, he believed on good authority, that on that occasion the House acted upon statements made, he had no doubt, by the noble Viscount in the best of faith—which were very far from accurately representing the facts.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY submitted that a statement of this kind should be accompanied by proper details, and should not be brought forward in a haphazard manner.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he did not charge the noble Viscount with any want of good faith, and he could see no impropriety in making a statement of that sort.

VISCOUNT CROSS said, he had never heard a single word from the noble Lord on the Woolsack on the subject since the occasion referred to, and he thought he had a right to be told that the matter was going to be brought forward.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he was very sorry if the noble Viscount considered he had made any personal charge against him, and he had not intended anything of the sort. He thought he was perfectly justified in using the expression he did, and he alluded to the matter in perfect good faith. On an occasion when a matter of this sort was being considered, they were obliged to act upon *ex parte* statements, and this, at least, he was entitled to say, that such statements might not always be related in good faith to the person who made use of them. The Legislature in the present case had imposed an absolute obligation upon the Charity Commissioners. Nothing could be clearer than that, unless, in the opinion of the Commissioners, or the Privy Council, the express trust required it, the Statute provided that the scheme should have the conscience clause in.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, the scheme had the conscience clause in, and it was not proposed to remove it, he understood.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, this provision was something in a sense more favourable to the Church than the conscience clause, but there was no obligation to make the provisions which the noble Viscount wished unless it was an excepted scheme; and the excepted schemes were only those where, either in the opinion of the Commissioners or the Privy Council, it was required by the express terms of the Foundation that the formularies of the Church should be taught. The noble Marquess said that they need not look very particularly at the words used in that section, because that House had the power in its hands to deal with the matter. It seemed to him that that was a very dangerous argument. What had been mainly relied on was not the instrument of foundation, but deeds showing the contemplation of further schools. But Parliament said they had no business to look beyond the deed of foundation.

VISCOUNT CROSS said, the words he had referred to were in the original deed:—

> "In further trust and confidence as to other regulations, the Trustees submit a deed now, at this time executed, called an explanatory deed, setting forth the final intentions of the founder in oppportuning the different Charities now founded."

THE LORD CHANCELLOR asked, how could one argue a legal question like this unless one compared the documents and considered the language used? It seemed to him that that House was not the proper tribunal to which to address an argument of that description. But the importance of this discussion was, that it should be clearly understood that every protection with which this Act fenced Educational Endowments to to secure the rights of Nonconformists were absolutely valueless, because this House, by its vote, could, and often did, set them aside.

*LORD HALSBURY said, the preamble of the noble and learned Lord's speech was absolutely irrelevant. Whatever the House had done was not now in question. The question that had arisen was short, though he would not say it was clear, because, although the Lord Chancellor had not expressed any opinion of his own, by the tone of his observations, he appeared to differ from the interpretation placed on the words by the noble Viscount. He, himself, did not deny that the Statute they had been dealing with required that the terms of the original instrument of foundation, or the Statutes, or Regulations made by the founder must expressly make the school a Church School. But where three instruments were referred to by a founder, the three must be taken together, if, as in this case, they referred to each other. He had never heard that principle questioned, and he doubted whether the Lord Chancellor, in his judicial capacity, would express any doubt about it. The Statute said :—" Are required to learn or to be instructed according to the doctrines . . . ." He paused, there, to point out that the noble Lord opposite, and, following his example, the Lord Chancellor omitted those words, and always referred to formularies. They must take both, and see whether either would satisfy the requirements. No one could have the smallest doubt in the world what the original settlor meant. Suppose some Nonconformist school were established, and children were required to go to " the Church," would it not be said they were being, contrary to the wishes of their parents, taught the doctrines of the Church of England ? When a clergyman, founding a school in the middle of the last century, propounded the statement that the sin of schism was a horrid one, from which children were to be guarded, and spoke about " the Church," did any human being pretend that he could have meant anything else than the Church of England ? The point was absolutely unarguable. So much for the language of the Statute, which expressly, and not by inference, required the children to attend the Church. But then it was said a dangerous doctrine was introduced by the noble Marquess behind him, that the House had an over-ruling power. So it had. The Lord Chancellor had made an impassioned attack on that power. Both Houses had this overruling power, and had exercised it. The Lord Chancellor said they must not do so, for they were interfering with Nonconformist rights. The noble and learned Lord seemed to have no notion of any rights but Nonconformist rights. The rights of the Church of England were to be protected also, and were intended to be preserved, not only by the Privy Council, but by the superior authority of the Houses of Parliament. If the House was not to discuss it, but it must go to the Privy Council, he did not understand what the object of the Sections in the Act of Parliament referred to was.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: There are a great many things which cannot go to the Privy Council.

*LORD HALSBURY: That was true. The language of the Act of Parliament, however, was absolutely general, and did not except such things as might go to the Privy Council. If either House of Parliament chose to intervene, the scheme could not go forward. There was a conscience clause in this scheme, and if the scheme were amended according to the view of the noble Viscount, the conscience clause would remain as ample as it could be. The only object of the noble Viscount was, that Church of England Schools should be preserved in their character.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Earl of KIMBERLEY) said, he thought the speech they had just heard justified the line taken by the Lord Chancellor. He had discussed the matter with the acumen and knowledge which, from his high position in the legal profession, they expected from him. But the point the Government took was that this was a question of law, and it should be properly discussed before a legal tribunal. When the noble and learned Lord pointed to the power given by the Act of Parliament to both Houses, he would say the power was given with regard to everything in the scheme. There was also provided an appeal to the Privy Council, and he supposed the promoters of the Act supposed that these powers would be exercised with a certain amount of discretion. It was a question of discretion, and, in his humble judgment, it was a great indiscretion on the part of this House to exercise the power on a question which was eminently for the legal tribunal provided in the Act. There was no authoritative decision in the matter even if the House threw out this particular clause. They might make an Amendment, and the Charity Commissioners might be afraid, in future, to put a clause into one of their schemes, although they might be convinced that it was their duty, because they knew he majority of the House could do exactly what they pleased, and that they would decide the matter as they thought right. It would be better, in the interests of all concerned, that a matter of the kind should be decided by the Privy Council. That decision would govern all the decisions of the Charity Commissioners afterwards, and the matter would be placed beyond all doubt. Undoubtedly, in asking questions of this kind, nice points might arise, because they had to deal with the clear, plain provision that there were to be special words used indicating the founders' intention. The noble and learned Lord said no human being could doubt the meaning of the words used. But the Charity Commissioners were human beings. The noble and learned Lord said the words were to be interpreted by common sense. That was exactly what was proposed. Some points of law were much better not decided by common sense. Certainly, there were many points of law, which, if decided by appeals to common sense, would be decided otherwise than as they ought to be. It was not a convenient thing to apply the principles of common sense to a point of law, which could be argued before the tribunal which the Act of Parliament had distinctly provided. If the words of the Act were against common sense, and if the decision of the tribunal, deciding according to law, was, in their opinion, at variance with the common sense of the matter, what was the proper course to take? Why, to amend the Act, and make it agree with the principle and policy they thought best. This House was eminently qualified to decide the matter on a question which was not one of law; but the question raised was one of mere law, and it was exceedingly dangerous that they should decide such a question simply according to what their predilections might be. It was quite likely that he might be biassed in his general view, and that it would not agree with that of the noble Marquess opposite, who might quite conscientiously have an equally strong bias the other way. On a matter of that kind, they wanted a perfectly impartial opinion, to be given by persons who would look at the matter simply and solely with regard to the intentions of the Act, as interpreted by persons competent to interpret it; and that was the reason why he deprecated that the House should come to a decision in the sense proposed by the noble Viscount opposite.

The House divided: Contents—42; Non-contents—18.

The House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Seven o'clock.

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, 26th March 1895.*

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The House met at Three of the clock.

## LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for the consideration of this Bill,

**Mr. CYRIL DODD** (Essex, Maldon) asked whether the Board of Trade had had any special difficulty with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company with regard to the hours of labour of their servants?

No answer being given,

**Mr. DODD** objected to the Bill being proceeded with until to-morrow, when some one could be in attendance to give an answer to this question.

The Order was accordingly deferred.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### DRUIDICAL STONES.

**Mr. J. G. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is now in a position to give effect to his promise of last year to spend about £20 to carry out the necessary work for the protection of the Druidical Stones, and approaches thereto, at Callernish, Island of Lewis; and, if so, will the work be put in hand without further delay?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I do not recollect having given any such promise to spend about £20 to carry out the necessary work for the protection of the Druidical Stones, and approaches thereto, at Callernish, Island of Lewis. The view of the Office of Works is, that, whilst Government is bound to protect and maintain this ancient monument, and is entitled to the means of access thereto for that purpose, the Act does not impose upon Government the duty of maintaining or repairing the approaches.

## ILLEGAL TRAWLING.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state to whom fishermen in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are to report cases of illegal trawling during the absence, on holiday, of fishery officers?

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. O. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): During the necessary absence of a fishery officer, cases of illegal trawling can always be reported direct to the Secretary of the Fishery Board.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what steps have been taken to deal with the numerous complaints of illegal trawling in Loch Roag, Island of Lewis; whether a gunboat has visited this district; if so, when; and whether she effected any captures?

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: On the 22nd February, H.M.S. *Starling* visited Loch Roag and communicated with some of the fishermen at Breasclete Bay, who informed the commander that no trawlers had been seen within the three mile limit for the previous six weeks. The *Starling* saw no trawlers working illegally.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that numerous steam trawlers work off the coasts of the Island of Lewis; that in the absence of a gunboat illegal trawling is extensively carried on; and that the Fishery Board takes no action against these trawlers unless complaints are lodged with the fishery officer at Stornoway, which is distant between 30 and 40 miles from some parts of the Island; and whether, seeing that the fishery officer stationed at Stornoway is removed to the East Coast during the great summer herring fishing, steps will be taken by the Fishery Board to retain a representative at that and other stations in Ross and Cromarty throughout the year?

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I am not aware that numerous steam trawlers work off the coasts of the Island of Lewis, or that, in the absence of a gunboat, illegal trawling is extensively carried on; but it is within my knowledge that since January last, every complaint made to the Fishery Board of illegal trawling on the north-west coast of Scotland, has been communicated to the Admiral Superintendent of Naval Reserves, and investigated and reported on by the Commander of the *Starling*, who did not in any of the cases detect any trawlers working illegally. I will inquire whether the officer stationed at Stornoway is to be detached on special duty during the coming season.

## THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is proposed to spend any part of the sum of £3,900, provided for in the Estimates under the heading of Minor Roads, in completing the footpaths and roads between townships and public schools in the Island of Lewis and the western mainland of Ross-shire; and, if so, how much?

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I am at present considering how the sum referred to can be most usefully and equitably distributed, and the claims of the Island of Lewis will receive consideration along with the claims from other districts.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the outlying districts of Inverness-shire?

*SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I will consider them, certainly; but I am not in a hurry to distribute the money.

## HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS COMMISSION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the fact that the crofter legislation referred to in the Queen's Speech is to be based on the Report of the Royal Commission (Highlands and Islands, 1892), and that the letterpress of that Report is already in type, and copies could be struck off in a few days, steps will be taken to issue the Report without waiting for the maps, in order that the Crofters' Bill may be introduced before Easter.

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: The Stationery Office have already been instructed to issue the Report at the earliest possible date.

DR. MACGREGOR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the forthcoming issue of the Report of the Highlands and Islands Commission, he will, in drafting a Bill based on that Report, consider the necessity of making any scheme of land purchase optional and not compulsory?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I will note the point referred to by the hon. Member.

### SCOTCH FISHERY BOARD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, if he will state whether the Fishery Board for Scotland expended the sum of £3,000 provided for in the Estimates for 1894–5 as a grant in aid of piers or quays; and, if so, will he state the names of the works which have been executed and the amount expended on each.

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: The sum of £3,000 provided for in the Estimates of the Fishery Board for Scotland for 1894–5 under Special Act of Parliament as a grant in aid of piers or quays, has not yet been expended. These annual grants are transferred to a deposit account on which the Board operate for the payments required from time to time in respect of harbour works assisted by them. The amounts expended on harbour works during the current financial year are as follows:—Balintore, £250; Broadford, £187; Ness, £127; Collieston, £55. Total £619.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what has become of the second-hand yacht *New Vigilant*, purchased by the Fishery Board last year, and converted into a cruiser for the purpose of protecting the fishing grounds on the north-west coasts of Scotland from illegal trawling?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: The fishery cruiser *Vigilant* has been under repair for damage sustained, but it is expected these repairs will be completed in a few days, when she will resume cruising.

### COASTGUARD OFFICERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he will state the name of the Department, or the fund, which provides the remuneration for coastguard officers who also act as fishery officers?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Board of Trade remunerates coastguard officers for fishery duties.

### GAELIC.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate (1) whether he is aware that Sheriff Johnstone, the sheriff principal for the counties of Ross, Cromarty, and Sutherland, has no knowledge of Gaelic; that last Autumn, on his visiting Stornoway, where there is a resident Gaelic-speaking sheriff, he tried and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment three crofters, for alleged poaching, on the evidence of one English-speaking witness; and also tried and sentenced to imprisonment one young girl for cutting some grass at the roadside; that none of the persons who were sentenced to imprisonment had the slightest knowledge of English; (2) whether he will state why these cases were not tried by the local Gaelic-speaking sheriff; (3) and, whether arrangements can be made to prevent Sheriff Johnstone from trying cases in the Island of Lewis, where the majority of the people speak Gaelic only.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross): I believe that Sheriff Johnston does not know Gaelic, but in cases in which witnesses are imperfectly acquainted with English, a skilled interpreter is always employed, and in the case referred to the accused were defended by an English-speaking solicitor, who, like the Sheriff, communicated with them without difficulty through the Interpreter of the Court. Although it is true that there was only one witness for the prosecution, it is not correct to say that the accused were convicted solely upon his evidence. They were convicted, in part, upon their own admission, their defence not having been a negative of the charge, but an excuse which entirely broke down. The accused had taken 37 salmon and 19 sea trout. With reference to the second case mentioned in the question, the girl was not convicted for cutting grass at the roadside. She was convicted of persistent trespass far away from the road, and of cutting and removing grass against warning from ground where she had no right to be.

## QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS.

MR. VICARY GIBBS (Herts, St. Albans): Arising out of these 11 questions, I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question of which I have given him previous notice—namely, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that those 11 questions, besides several supplementary ones, have been put by one Member, many of those questions being of little or no public interest; and whether he does not regard such action as an abuse of the privileges of the House, and calculated to lead to the curtailment of a valuable privilege enjoyed by hon. Members.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid.): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the question from the point of view of computing that, if a similar number of questions were asked by every Member of the House, it would take 15 days of eight hours to answer them.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): That is not a matter of which I am the judge. The House is the judge, and it must form its own opinion on that subject; and, when it expresses that opinion, I feel sure that hon. Members will desire to conform to the wishes of the House and restrain the number of questions put.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Has any Member of the Tory Opposition ever done a thing of this kind?

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is still less my duty to answer for the Tory Opposition.

## THE NEW EDUCATION CODE.

MR. J. ROUND (Essex, S.E., Harwich): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether he will consider the propriety of omitting section (d) in Clause 48 of the New Code, which excludes from the admission examination to training colleges, candidates who have failed twice.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): I am afraid I cannot undertake to alter this provision. If candidates fail on two successive occasions even to pass the admission examination, the fact must be taken to indicate that they are not competent for the teaching profession.

MR. J. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, as the new Education Code already somewhat extends the area which receives the benefit of the Highland Minute Grant by the inclusion of burghs with less than 10,000 inhabitants, a modified Minute can be laid upon the Table adding, after the words "Inverness, Ross, Argyll, Sutherland, Caithness, and Orkney and Shetland," the amending words "and in the additional parishes of the counties of Elgin, Banff, Aberdeen, Perth, and Dunbarton, recognised as falling within the Highland area by the Trust for Education in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland."

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: The provisions of the Code in the selection of certain counties for favourable treatment in respect of Grant are based upon the Act of 1872, in regard to the counties of Inverness, Ross, Argyll, and Orkney and Shetland; Caithness and Sutherland have been included in terms of the Parliamentary Grant (Caithness and Sutherland) Act, 1889. I am not prepared to place a Minute on the Table except with regard to counties indicated by an Act of Parliament.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, as it is stated in the revised instructions issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, that one of the objects of the alterations made in recent Codes has been to emphasise, by means of a special and graduated grant for discipline and organisation, the importance of conduct and moral training as essential factors of the success and usefulness of a public elementary school, he will reconsider that portion of the Code of 1895 which proposes to make the higher grant for discipline and organisation depend upon provision being made in a school for drill or physical training?

MR. ACLAND: The full description of the object of the Discipline and

Organisation Grant will be found in the Code itself (Article 101 b.) It includes a variety of other matters besides those mentioned in the question. When these are looked at as a whole, I do not think that there will be found to be any inconsistency in the requirements made as to drill or physical exercises.

MR. JOHNSTONE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the House will have an opportunity of discussing this part of the Code?

MR. ACLAND: Of course; it may be debated on the Estimates.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the historical requirements of the new Code, which are widely different from those now in force, will render obsolete nearly all the historical reading books now in use, and thereby inflict serious additional expenditure on the various School Boards and school managers; and whether he will reconsider these requirements?

MR. ACLAND: I may point out to the hon. Member that the new syllabus in history is not compulsory. Any School Board or body of school managers may submit an alternative course for approval, and if such course generally conforms to the syllabus in the previous Code, it will be accepted. This provision will, I hope, satisfactorily meet the cases in which there is a stock of history readers in hand which it is desired to retain in use.

MR. TALBOT asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the regulation caused consternation amongst the managers of schools, the idea being that the whole of the stock would be worthless?

MR. ACLAND thought this was the result of an imperfect reading of the Code.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if, under the Code of 1895, when object lessons and suitable occupations are taken as class subjects for Standards I., II., and III. in a public elementary school, children who pass out of those standards, and receive instruction in other class subjects, will be expected to come up to the standard of examination in those subjects, indicated in the second schedule to the Code as suitable to the standard in which they are when examined.

MR. ACLAND: Children, when they pass into the Fourth Standard and take up one or more of the class subjects mentioned in Schedule II., will be instructed in the stage applicable to that standard. I do not anticipate that any serious difficulty will result. In many cases the children will have been prepared for the new class subject by the course of object lessons previously taken, and Her Majesty's Inspector will, in all cases, take into account the novelty of the new subject to the children, and make due allowances.

## FOREIGN COIN IN THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, under Boer law, any person entering the Transvaal with British silver money in his possession is liable to be searched and fined or imprisoned; whether a similar prohibition exists and is enforcible by similar penalties in any civilised country; and whether, if the facts are as stated, Her Majesty's Government will call the attention of the Boer Government to the unfriendly nature of the enactment referred to, with a view to securing its prompt repeal?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Under a law of 1891 of the South African Republic, any person bringing into the Transvaal for purposes of circulation any foreign coin is liable to be searched and fined or imprisoned. A somewhat similar prohibition exists in what I think I may call a civilised country, namely, the United Kingdom. It dates from 1886, and is directed against the importation of all foreign coins other than gold and silver coins. In 1870, a Proclamation containing a somewhat similar prohibition was issued by the Governor of Gibraltar, directed against the importation of foreign copper coins. In Cyprus, in 1879, the importation of all silver (including British) coins was prohibited; and in the Straits Settlements, in 1891, power was given to the Governor to prohibit the importation of such foreign coins, not being legal tender, as might be specified. This list is probably not exhaustive. The coinage of the South African Republic is not recognised a legal tender in the British Colonies in South Africa. I give these facts in reply to the questions asked; but without expressing any opinion in regard to the action the South African Republic have taken in this matter.

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER asked whether there were any precedents for the exclusion of coin of a friendly country; whether the British precedents referred to were not precedents of laws passed to exclude counterfeit coin or coin intended for the purpose of committing crime.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I must ask for notice of that question.

### IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. C. DIAMOND (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the salaries of Irish national teachers are paid quarterly, and then not till 15 days after the termination of each quarter; whether payment of the salaries of any other class of public servants is deferred for so long a period after they fall due; and whether, considering the fact that the 14th April (the date of issue of the teachers' money orders) falls this year on Easter Sunday, the Commissioners of National Education will see the desirability of having teachers' money orders issued so as to be in the hands of the teachers on Saturday, 13th April?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The practice of remitting the quarterly salaries of teachers a fortnight after the completion of the quarter is, I am informed, a very long-established one, and teachers consequently receive their money exactly three months after the previous payment. The Commissioners could not undertake to alter the quarterly pay-day, nor to have the money orders in the hands of teachers on the 13th April; but they will endeavour to expedite the payments as much as practicable.

MR. C. DIAMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in some of the national schools in the county Monaghan the average attendance of pupils for the quarter ending in December last was considerably reduced, owing to an epidemic of diphtheria; and whether the Commissioners of National Education will duly consider the fact, should the attendance for the current quarter in any such school fall below the number required owing to the exceptional and continuous severity of the weather during the months of January and February?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Commissioners are aware that in county Monaghan diphtheria prevailed in some localities, and the attendances of pupils at some of the schools were injuriously affected last quarter owiug to the epidemic. The occurrence of the exceptionally severe weather of January and February has already been under consideration, and in cases where, owing to such cause, or to epidemics, the attendance of pupils for the current quarter is found to fall short of the usual number, the Commissioners will be prepared to deal as leniently with the teachers as the regulations may enable them to do.

### CLOTH FACTORIES.

MR. S. WOODS (Lancashire, Ince): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Bill which he introduced recently, to amend and extend the Law relating to Factories and Workshops, will apply to factories where they manufacture clothing, generally called cloth factories; whether it will apply to industries known by the name of wool-sorters, of which there are a considerable number in Yorkshire and other places; and if the application of the said Bill does not apply to these cases, whether he will extend its operation to meet a very strong desire expressed by the people engaged in these industries?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The Bill does extend to the industries to which my hon. Friend refers, subject to the general exception that the Factory and Workshop Acts do not apply—except in the case of certain sanitary provisions—to workshops in which men only are employed. An Amendment, however, will be proposed by the Government in Committee on the Bill to extend to such workshops the power given to the Secretary of State by Section 8 of the

Act of 1891 to make special rules for industries certified to be dangerous or injurious. An inquiry has for some time been in process by the Factory Department into certain industries which involve the risk of injury to the persons employed — among them being wool-sorting, where there is a possibility that anthrax may be contracted—and this inquiry is nearly completed. On its completion the question whether special rules are desirable for the occupation of wool-sorting will be considered; and on the Bill, with the Amendment I have indicated, becoming law, it will be possible to make any such rules applicable to the industry so far as it is carried on in workshops where men only are employed—which would otherwise be exempt.

*MR. W. P. BYLES (York, W. R., Shipley) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he had seen the precautionary regulations drawn up eleven years ago by the Town Council of Bradford with respect to wool-sorters, and whether those precautions, which hitherto had been imperfectly enforced, would not be adequate if enforced under this Bill?

MR. ASQUITH had seen the regulations to which his hon. Friend referred, and he believed that where they had been enforced they had been adequate. He would consider whether they could be adopted in the Bill.

## THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

*MR. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to a statement in Resolutions of the Committee of the Church and State of the Free Church, adopted January, 1895, and authorised for publication, to the effect that it has been announced for the first time that, during the present Session, a Government Bill will be presented to Parliament intended to terminate the present Establishment of the Church in Scotland; and whether the statement is correct; and, if so, when and where such announcement was made?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I am not responsible for the statement in the Resolution to which my attention has been called by the hon. Member. I can only refer him to the reply given by me on the 14th of February to the hon. Member for South Lanarkshire, which I have no doubt he heard at the time it was made.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to bring in a Bill to Disestablish and Disendow the Church of Scotland; and, if not, is it the intention of the Government to adopt as their own, and give facilities to the passing of the Church of Scotland Bill of the hon. Member for the College Division?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I must refer the hon. Member to the reply given by me to the hon. Member for Lanarkshire, which he probably heard at the time it was made.

SIR M. STEWART: With all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, in the reply he refers to he does not answer the second part of my question.

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: Yes, the hon. Member will find it there.

MR. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Government will give facilities for passing the Bill for Disestablishing the Church of Scotland brought in by the hon. Member for the College Division?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: I did not reply to that question, I admit. I think that question should be put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have not facilities at my disposal

## THE CITY AND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. ALBERT SPICER (Monmouth District): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, for the convenience of Members of the House coming from the City, he would issue the same order to the Commissioner of Police for the City of London that is given to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, to take care that during the Session of Parliament the passages through the streets leading to the House should be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from the House?

MR. ASQUITH: I would point out to my hon. Friend that the direction on this subject, which is given to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, is by a Sessional Order of the House of Commons. It is open to the House if it pleases to order that a similar direction be given to the Commissioner of Police for the City. For my own part, I hardly think that such a direction would be warranted. The streets east of Temple Bar can scarcely be said (except in a very remote and circuitous sense) to be streets "leading to the House," and the Embankment is generally available and rarely crowded.

MR. SPICER pointed out that a great many Members of the House came from the City, and the difficulty of getting through the streets often imperilled their punctual attendance at the House.

## KILLYBEGS PIER.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state when the construction of the long-promised pier for the harbour of Killybegs, County Donegal, will be commenced.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. HIBBERT, Oldham): The proposal of the Congested Districts Board to erect an iron pier presents two difficulties. Railway funds cannot legally be devoted to such a purpose, and it would apparently be impossible to create a Harbour Authority armed with sufficient means to ensure the future maintenance of a work so liable to accident as an iron pier. The question is being considered whether the railway funds might not be applied either to constructing a concrete quay wall as part of the station works to accommodate the class of vessels which use the old pier, or else (if supplemented by outside funds) to constructing a quay suitable for the larger class of vessels which would be accommodated by the proposed iron pier. In either case, the railway funds would be legally applicable, and the future maintenance of such a quay would be less expensive than that of an iron pier. But in either case it is uncertain whether there will be sufficient balance available from the railway funds—a question which cannot be decided for some little time; and, in the latter case, I am not yet aware whether the Congested Districts Board will be prepared to contribute the balance required.

## THE MAHARAJAH OF BHURTPORE.

MR. J. SEYMOUR KEAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to a telegram published in *The Times* of the 18th instant, stating that, as the Maharajah of Bhurtpore has shown himself incapable of governing his State, the British Resident will administer it until other arrangements are made; whether the present Maharajah only ascended the throne on the death of his father about 12 months ago, and whether on that occasion the Government of India notified that the British Resident would conduct the Government for a period of 12 months; what opportunity has the Maharajah had of proving his capacity or otherwise for conducting his own Government; and could he state what he has done to merit so serious a punishment as appears to have been inflicted?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds): No information has been received beyond what has appeared in the newspapers. The Government of India have been asked to furnish a Report, by mail, as soon as possible.

## PRISONS CLERICAL STAFF.

MR. H. R. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that their are eight members of the clerical staff in Her Majesty's prisons (England and Wales) above the age of 60 years, the average of their ages being 64 years, with an average length of service of 40 years; if so, why these officers are not superannuated under the terms of the Treasury Minute, dated 12th December 1890, founded on the Order in Council dated 15th August 1890; and, whether these officers are physically fit to perform their arduous duties as prison officials?

MR. ASQUITH: As a matter of fact there are 12 members of the clerical staff of Her Majesty's prisons above the age of 60 years, and not eight as stated by the hon. Member. They do not come under the terms of the Treasury Minute or the Order in Council referred to, as they do not draw salaries in excess of those of the Second Division. The only exception is the Storekeeper at Pentonville Prison, and he, having been appointed by the late prison authorities and transferred under the Prisons Act 1877, holds his office by virtue of Section 35 of that Act upon the same terms as before, and is not affected by the Order in Council. None of these gentlemen are reported as being physically unfit to perform their duties.

## RELIEF WORKS IN IRELAND.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the proposed alteration of the scheme of relief works projected between Termon and Glenvar, he will reconsider the proposal to make a road over the Knockalla Mountain towards which the Congested Districts Board might be willing to contribute, so as to shorten the way from Rathmullen to Portsalon by five miles, and enable the poorer people to draw the turf from the mountain?

MR. J. MORLEY: I stated in reply to my hon. Friend's previous question of the 18th instant that a work would be opened in the neighbourhood of Glenvar for the relief of a small number of fishermen at that place who had lost their boats in the late storms. A separate work will be opened at Termon, which is some distance away, for the relief of a number of distressed landholders in that locality. It would not, I fear, be possible to concentrate the labour from these two points on the suggested road over Knockalla Mountain; and, independently of this, the cost of the undertaking is beyond the scope of the proposed operations in this part of Donegal. But I may add that the Congested Districts Board are prepared to make a grant of £1,000 towards the cost of constructing the road in question, provided the balance (£1,800, I believe), is forthcoming from the county funds or other sources.

## PARISH COUNCILS.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, when will the Board issue regulations to enable certain County Councils to make the necessary orders for the establishment of Parish Councils in parishes of less than 300 inhabitants, from which applications have been received, in many cases, as far back as December last?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The regulations already in force enable County Councils to take all necessary steps for establishing Parish Councils in small parishes.

## A DRAINAGE OBSTRUCTION.

MR. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that in the Strokestown Drainage District, on the townlands of Carrownrinny, Ballydaly, and Sheegeeragh, in the main drain running through the latter townlands, an obstruction has been erected, and is allowed to exist, which has created a backwater injurious to certain portions of the lands of Sheegeeragh, particularly the potato crop planted in the spring of 1894; and, whether steps will be taken to prevent further injury to the lands and crops of the occupiers?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT: The Board of Works have received the following explanation from the Secretary to the Drainage Trustees, with whom the whole responsibility rests:—The obstruction referred to exists, and it is persistently kept up by a tenant whose farm it adjoins for the purpose of providing a watering place for his cattle. The obstruction was completely removed by the Superintendent of Works in the district some time past, but it was subsequently replaced by the tenant referred to. The Strokestown Drainage Board, at their last meeting, directed the Secretary of the Drainage Trustees to request the agent over the estate in which the obstruction is, to meet some members of the Board where the obstruction is, with the view of having the matter amicably arranged. He was represented on the ground, and it was agreed upon that the agent would provide the necessary accommodation for the tenant's cattle. The Drainage Board will now press to have the arrangement carried out, and should it not be done the Drainage Board will resort to law proceedings.

### CARRYING ARMS IN IRELAND.

**Mr. P. A. M'HUGH** (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet completed the inquiry already promised as to the propriety of allowing a man named Brady, of Ballinaglera, county Leitrim, to hold a licence to carry arms; and will he state the result?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I have caused inquiry to be made into the circumstances leading to the recent prosecution of this man, which resulted in his conviction and his being placed under a rule of bail. It is not proposed, at present, to take the extreme step of depriving him of his arm's licence, but he has been warned that a repetition of misconduct on his part will lead to the forfeiture of his licence.

### DISTRESS IN NORTH LEITRIM.

**Mr. P. A. M'HUGH**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received representations from responsible and well-informed persons in regard to the prevalence of acute distress in North Leitrim; is he aware that certain portions of North Leitrim are amongst the poorest and most congested districts in Ireland, and that the intention of the Poor Law Guardians to grant out-door relief would, if availed of, result in still further increasing the burdens of those who are present the poorest and most heavily rated; and does he propose to take any steps to meet the distress at present prevailing in North Leitrim; and, if so, what steps, and when does he propose to move in the matter?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: Very careful inquiries have been made into the representations alleging the existence of distress in North Leitrim, and, while it appears that a number of small landowners are in straitened circumstances, there is not, I am advised, any widespread or abnormal destitution which would necessitate the establishment of relief works. The rates of the Unions comprising the northern part of the County Leitrim are generally very low, and the numbers on relief have not increased as compared with last year. The Local Government Board have authorised the Guardians to give outdoor relief to any destitute persons requiring it, and they think this measure will enable any isolated cases of distress to be dealt with.

### INDIAN IMPORT DUTIES.

**Mr. W. H. HOLLAND** (Salford, N): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether it is the intention of the Indian Government to give effect to the House of Commons' Resolution of July 1877 relating to Import Duties, namely, that they ought to be repealed without delay, so soon as the financial condition of India will permit?

**Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL**: The Indian Government, no doubt, regret the necessity for imposing a Duty upon Imports; but the state of the finances of India is not at present such as to encourage any hope that it can be dispensed with.

### TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

**Mr. T. SEXTON** (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state why the Reid exhibitions in Trinity College for Kerry students have not been awarded every year since 1886, the Reid prizes for Kerry monitors having been awarded annually throughout the intervening period; how long Part 2 of the Reid bequest scheme has been in operation; to how many students the Reid exhibitions in Trinity College have been awarded, and what is their religious persuasion; whether those students were trained in the Marlborough Street Training College; and whether it was on the result of their answering in this college that the Reid exhibitions were awarded to them?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I must ask my hon. Friend to defer this question until Thursday. Telegraphic communication with Dublin is still interrupted, and I have not been able to obtain a Report on the question to-day.

### THE ISLAND OF COLL.

**Sir D. MACFARLANE** (Argyll): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been called to the condition of some of the poor cultivators in the Island of Coll who are unable to purchase seed for their Spring crops; and if he will enable them to obtain the necessary seed, without which they must ultimately be reduced to starvation?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN: My attention has not been called to the matter. If any application is laid before me, I shall refer it to the Local Government Board.

DR. MACGREGOR said, great destitution existed in the Hebrides. Would the right hon. Gentleman see that the state of things there was not overlooked?

SIR G. O. TREVELYAN said he would refer the matter to the Inspectors.

### SWAZILAND.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Eccleshall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government have been officially informed by Her Majesty's representative in Swaziland that the Swazis have accepted the administration of the Boer agent over the Swazi people; and whether he will explain what is the meaning of the statement that the Organic Proclamation no longer existed?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have already informed the House that we have learnt through the High Commissioner, who, of course, receives his information direct from the British representative in Swaziland, that on March 18th, the South African Republic Commissioners met the King, Queen, and Swazi representatives, and that the meeting passed off peaceably and satisfactorily, the position of the King as Paramount Chief being officially recognised by the South African Republic. It may be assumed, therefore, that the Swazi King and people have peaceably acquiesced in the administration of the South African Republic. The Organic Proclamation was never more than a draft proclamation; and the Swazis declining to sign it, it was never brought into existence.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Why, then, did Colonel Martin, Her Majesty's representative, in his interview with the Swazi Queen Regent, King and Council on February 13, urge them to sign the Organic Proclamation, and why did the Queen and young King then positively refuse to sign it; whether a compromise has since been effected; and whether there is now any actual and practical Boer administration of Swaziland?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have already said that the information we have received is to the effect that the Transvaal representatives met the representatives of the Swazis, and had an amicable arrangement. We have, therefore, assumed that Swaziland has peaceably acquiesced to the terms of the Boer Government, which has now a representative in the country.

### JABEZ BALFOUR.

MR. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, what information he now has concerning the extradition of Jabez Balfour; and what has been the result of the legal proceedings taken against Jabez Balfour in the Courts of Salta?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The judgment of the Fiscal General at Salta was delivered on the 20th, and was entirely unfavourable to Balfour in the Klix suit. The Appeal Court has also quashed this suit. We are informed that it still remains for the Judge to decide if there is ground for action at all in a suit brought by a man named Borthwick, and whether it is civil or criminal, but that this is the only remaining obstacle, and that it is not considered probable that it will be sustained by the Argentine Republic.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The hon. Baronet says the decision was unfavourable to Balfour. Does that mean that he was acquitted of the charge?

SIR E. GREY: I think the terms I have given are taken from the telegram received, and they are so satisfactory, so far as that suit is concerned, that I do not think I can advisedly add to them.

MR. C. J. DARLING: Can the hon. Baronet tell us when the suit in which Borthwick is prosecutor or plaintiff is likely to be decided?

SIR E. GREY: We only heard this morning that the proceedings of the Salta Brewery case were finally decided, and it is only reasonable to suppose, as Borthwick is the lessee of the brewery, that this decision will also carry with it a decision in Borthwick's case. From what I have already stated I think the hon. Member will see that there is some reason to hope that that is the view which will be finally taken.

### THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, what steps other than advertising in the official *London Gazette* are taken to give publicity to the Orders of the Board of Agriculture, and particularly to those recently issued bearing upon The Transit of Animals, No. 5,305; The Water Supply on Railways, No. 5,306; and The Foreign Animals Order of 1895, No. 5,307; and whether he will take steps to secure that all Orders affecting the movement of cattle, sheep, and swine shall be advertised in the organ of the meat and cattle trade as well as in the official publications, that are never seen by live-stock dealers, salesmen, and butchers?

*MR. HERBERT GARDNER: The steps taken for the publication otherwise than in *The London Gazette* of the Orders made by the Board of Agriculture under the Diseases of Animals Act depend upon whether the Order is of a local or of a general character. In the former case the Order is usually sent to the local authority with a request that it may be published in their district. In the latter case, copies of the Order are sent direct to local authorities and railway and shipping companies, and also to those newspapers and private persons interested in such matters who have expresed a desire to receive them. This is the course now being taken in the three cases to which my hon. Friend refers. Judging from our experience in the past I do not think that the expenditure proposed by my hon. Friend is necessary, and in any case the suggestion is one which could not be adopted without regard to the arrangements for the publication of statutory rules generally —a matter which, as my hon. Friend will recollect, was the subject of legislation last year.

### THE IRISH LIGHTS BOARD.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the constitution of the Irish Lights Board, with a view to the alteration or reconstruction of the Board upon a basis satisfactory to the mercantile and shipping community in Ireland?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The constitution of the Irish Lights Board has long been admitted to deserve inquiry—and I say this without any disparagement of the present members of the Board, who have shown much zeal and capacity in the discharge of their duties—with a view to placing the Board upon a basis more representative of the shipping interests of Ireland. I shall, therefore, be prepared to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee for that purpose. But as the whole subject of light dues and the lighthouse authorities for the United Kingdom is at present being considered by a Committee of great weight, presided over by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, I think that before expressing an opinion as to a time for the appointment of such a Select Committee I should inquire when the Report of that Departmental Committee will be presented, which I hope may be very shortly.

MR. T. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had any objection to refer to the Committee the Bill on the subject of the Irish Lights Board which stood on the Paper.

MR. BRYCE: I cannot say that the Bill, so far as I know its provisions, would furnish a good basis for the reconstruction of the Board. I should like, therefore, to reserve my answer to that question.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Is there any precedent for the formation of a Lights Board by election?

MR. BRYCE: That does not arise under the question.

MR. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) asked when the Report of the Departmental Committee would be laid on the Table of the House?

MR. BRYCE: I cannot say positively, but I hope soon.

### SIAM.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the French have established a post at Keng Kong, on the western and Siamese side of the Mekong, within 20 miles of the British frontier; and whether this act is a breach of the Franco-Siamese Treaty, and also of the Agreements between France and England, signed in 1893?

Sir EDWARD GREY: The attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a notice which appeared in the *Temps* newspaper of the 23rd inst., stating that a fortified post was about to be established on the left bank of the Mekong at Chieng Khong, a Lastian village situated some distance above Luang Prabang. The information in the possession of Her Majesty Government confirms the statement in the French newspaper that the new post is on the left or eastern bank of the Mekong.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Have the Government got any information as to any French operations in Siamese territory on the right bank of the Mekong?

Sir EDWARD GREY: We have not heard of any French post on the right bank?

### AN IRISH LABOURER'S COTTAGE.

Mr. J. JORDAN (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the House in which Patrick Gibbons resides, in Moyangher, Rathmore Division of the Trim Union, County Meath, was condemned by the Sanitary Authority as unfit for human habitation; that more than twelve months ago he made application for a labourer's cottage, and the application was approved by the Local Government Board Inspector and granted by the Board of Guardians; and, as the house has not yet been erected, will he ascertain the cause of the delay?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The facts appear to be as stated in the question. The Provisional Order confirming the Guardians' scheme was issued by the Local Government Board on the 22nd August; petitions were lodged against it, and the Order had to be confirmed by the Privy Council, which was done on the 17th January last.

### DISTRESS FROM WANT OF EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

*Mr. W. P. BYLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Minutes of Evidence given before the Distress from Want of Employment Committee will be circulated to Members of the House in order that they may be able to estimate the value of the Interim Report which has already been issued?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): Yes, Sir; every dispatch is being used in the preparation of the Appendix to this Report, which will contain not only the evidence, but the answers received from the local authorities so far as they have come in up to the date of the Report. It is rather a voluminous document, and must take some little time to prepare, but no time will be lost in issuing it.

*Mr. BYLES asked whether the Minutes of Evidence, which were already in print and circulated amongst the members of the Committee, could not at once be circulated amongst the Members of the House?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; the Minutes of Evidence are always circulated amongst the Members of a Committee, but not among the Members of the House until they are presented to the House with the Report. Very little time will be lost in presenting the Report.

### ECCLESIASTICAL SUIT.

Sir W. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask the Comptroller of the Household, as Ecclesiastical Commissioner, what amount has been charged on the revenues received by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners from the Dean and Canons of Manchester, for legal expenses in the suit of the Attorney General *versus* the Dean and Canons of Manchester and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; what part of such expenses was incurred by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and what part was paid for expenses of plaintiffs; what expenses of administration are charged upon the surplus revenues; and, what amount of interest on sums invested or on balances from time to time in hand has been placed to the credit of the account since 31st October 1885?

The COMPTROLLER of the HOUSEHOLD (Mr. George Leveson-Gower, Stoke-upon-Trent): The amounts charged upon the revenues received by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners from the Dean and Canons of Manchester for legal expenses in the suit of the Attorney General *versus* the Dean and Canons of

Manchester and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are as follows :—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Costs of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners ... ... ... ... | 842 | 6 | 9 |
| Costs of Plaintiffs ... ... ... | 1466 | 15 | 6 |
| Costs of Rector and Churchwardens of St. Mary, Manchester... ... | 32 | 19 | 8 |
| Total Costs charged on Revenues | £2342 | 1 | 11 |

No expenses of administration are charged upon the surplus revenues other than the charges paid to the surveyors employed by the Commissioners in connection with the granting of leases of capitular property. The sum of £870 4s. 1d. has been placed to the credit of the account since the 31st of October 1885, in respect of interest upon sums invested.

## TRESPASSING BY CATTLE.

Mr. J. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. J. Tyrrell Byrne, J.P., Drumsna, South Leitrim, in consequence of a private quarrel with his neighbour, Mr. Peter Caslin, P.L.G., has caused instructions to be given to the Drumsna police to watch the premises of Mr. Caslin every morning in order to see if his cattle, when going to the River Shannon to drink, trespass on a footpath passing his place; and whether he will direct the police in future not to interfere, and let the parties settle their disputes in the courts of law?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Under Sub-section 4 of Section 9 of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Act, 1851, any person driving cattle deliberately and unnecessarily on any footpath is liable to a fine of 20s. The footpath mentioned in the question is part of the public highway. It is the duty of the police to summon any person acting in contravention of the above-mentioned enactment.

## INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the number of fixed officers of the outdoor and indoor branches of the Inland Revenue, respectively; the number of officers in each branch dismissed, reduced, removed on censure, or censured, during the year ended the 31st December 1894, entailing loss of annual increment of salary, and promotion within a stated period; whether the censure stands recorded against him while in the service of the Commissioners, and is taken into consideration as against his character when his time for further promotion or superannuation arrives; whether this system obtains in any other Department of the public service; and whether he will consider the advisability of a reform in the system of punishment of public servants holding appointments in the Department?

Sir W. HARCOURT: The number of fixed officers of the outdoor and indoor branches of the Inland Revenue respectively are 4,077 and 1,326. The number of officers in the outdoor branch dismissed during the year ended 31st December 1894, was two; 13 were reduced; 10 removed on censure; and 15 censured. No indoor officer received a punishment entailing loss of annual increment of salary and promotion within the stated period. Although a censure stands recorded against an officer during his service, its effect on his increment is limited to one or two years, as the case may be. It also retards his promotion by six months or a year. Censure does not as a rule affect an officer's superannuation allowance, unless it is of recent date, or the offence has been very grave. I have answered this question as to facts, but I would appeal to the hon. Member and to the House not to seek to take the discipline of a great Department out of the hands of those responsible for its administration. In no Department is it more necessary that this responsibility should be maintained than in the outdoor Excise. If there are grounds of complaint in particular cases I will undertake to inquire into and deal with them, and I will be responsible for it. That is an office which this House cannot discharge, and I am satisfied that there is no case for such a change as that indicated by the hon. Member.

## WELLINGTON BARRACKS.

Captain BAGOT (Westmorland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the smoke test has on two recent occasions been applied to the drains at Wellington Barracks; and, if so, with what result?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Under the smoke test a leak was discovered in a pipe in the basement, and it was repaired, but on retesting it last week it was found that there was still a slight escape. In order to remove all doubts about these quarters, which were built 40 years ago, a thorough examination by the sanitary expert, Mr. Tyndale, has been ordered, and should defects be disclosed they will be immediately corrected.

## ASSAULT ON A DOCK LABOURER.

MR. R. J. D. BURNIE: On behalf of the hon. Member for South West Ham (Mr. J. Keir Hardie), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the decision given by the stipendiary of West Ham, in the case of assault tried before him on the 13th instant, when a dock labourer named Charles Jordan, and William Harris, an official of the Dockers' Union, were each charged with assault; whether he is aware that a dock constable who witnessed the case testified that Jordan walked in to the dock and struck Harris without provocation, and then ran away; that the case against Jordan was dismissed, whilst Harris was found guilty and fined 20s. and costs; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case?

MR. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to the case. It would seem from the notes of the evidence that the dock constable did not identify Jordan as the assailant of Harris, and the magistrate was of opinion that the only blow proved to have been given by Jordan was given in self-defence after he was struck by Harris. The question was purely one of fact, and without saying whether I should or should not have come to the same conclusion as the magistrate did upon the evidence yet, as he had the advantage of seeing and hearing the witnesses, I do not feel justified in interfering with his decision.

## MONITORS IN IRISH SCHOOLS.

MR. L. P. HAYDEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin (Mr. W. Field), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Teachers' Congress of 1893 a resolution was adopted, asking the Commissioners to exempt members of teachers' families from the new regulations, which provide that no person shall be eligible for the position of principal or assistant who has not successfully passed through a five years' monitorial course, or who has not been trained in one of the recognised training colleges; and whether, in view of the fact that the members of teachers' families have the same facilities for acquiring a knowledge of the best methods of teaching that paid monitors have, he will recommend the Commissioners to admit them to the examinations under the old regulations, and more particularly so in cases where, when a teacher is obliged to retire through ill-health, a member of his family is qualified to take his place?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Commissioners of National Education are aware of the resolution of the nature indicated in the question. The Commissioners appoint paid monitors on the recommendation of the Inspectors, who select them by competitive examination from the eligible pupils. They are appointed only in National Schools that are efficiently conducted, and whose teachers are certified by the Inspectors as well qualified to instruct and train monitors in the art of teaching and the organisation of schools. At the end of their course of five years, monitors are examined for classification, and if they pass the examination successfully they are eligible for teacherships, without passing through a training college. There is nothing in the Rules to debar pupils who are the sons or daughters of the teachers from candidature for monitorships in their schools, in cases where the ordinary conditions are fulfilled. But the Commissioners would strongly disapprove of a relaxation for purposes of family interests, of those conditions which, in respect to untrained candidates, they consider to be necessary for maintaining a due standard of fitness for teacherships. As regards the cases of teachers retiring from ill-health, it is open to the manager to appoint a member of the teacher's family as successor to the teachership; but the Commissioners could not sanction any arrangements under which the incoming teacher shall be exempt from the conditions of monitorial service or of training.

### MAY LABOUR DEMONSTRATIONS.

MR. BURNIE: On behalf of the hon. Member for South West Ham (Mr. Keir Hardie), I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the fact that May 1st is made the occasion for the holding of labour demonstrations all over Europe; whether the Government will introduce a Bill making this day a general holiday; and whether they will set an example to other employers of labour by granting all their workpeople a holiday on May Day without loss of pay?

SIR W. HARCOURT: My answer to that question must be in the negative.

### PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. C. J. DARLING: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the Government intend to take to give effect to the Resolution passed on Friday last by this House, that a reasonable allowance should forthwith be granted to all Members of Parliament?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have already stated more than once that in my opinion this can only be accomplished by a Bill, and the Government, when they consider it practicable, will introduce a Bill on the subject.

MR. DARLING: Arising out of that answer, I should desire to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, seeing that the Resolution which was come to, that a reasonable allowance should forthwith be granted to all Members of Parliament was supported by the Government, and seeing that that includes the Members of the House of Lords, whether the right hon. Gentleman will, as there is time in the House of Lords for the introduction of a Bill, have a Bill introduced there?

[No answer was given].

### PLACES OF WORSHIP (LEASEHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. S. T. Evans, Bill for the Enfranchisement of the Sites of Leasehold Places of Worship.

Bill presented accordingly, and read a first time; to be read a second time on Monday, 8th April, and to be printed. [Bill 184.]

*Mr. J. Morley.*

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [21st March], "That the Bill be now read a Second time;" and which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words, "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach*).

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. D. R. PLUNKET (Dublin University) said: I hope the hon. Member for the Eccles Division, who spoke last night, will not think I am wanting in respect for him if I do not attempt to follow him into the very learned address which he delivered. The truth is, I was not able myself very accurately to apprehend the position which the hon. Member wished to take up. Nine-tenths of the speech of the hon. Member was a closely-reasoned argument which, if it was good for anything, was good for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in every part of England, but at the conclusion of his speech he graciously intimated to the House that he was not prepared at that moment to give effect to the result of those forcible reasons. Whether it was in consequence of the inscrutable pledge which the hon. Member told us he had given to his constituents that he would not Vote for the Disestablishment of the Church of England, or whether it was those genial social relations which he described as existing between himself and certain high dignitaries of that Church, or whether it was the new-fangled doctrine which the hon. Member laid down just at the end of his speech, by which it appears that the inhabitants of any circumscription of the country have always a right to seize on and appropriate to their own use any portions of the endowments of the Church of England which happened to lay handy to them—which of these influences it was that decided the hon. Member at the end to declare himself in direct opposition to the whole purpose of the rest of his speech, I am sure I cannot tell.

*MR. H. J. ROBY (Eccles): I said there were two questions. First: Is the property national? And, secondly: Is there a large majority of the inhabitants in favour of the Disestablishment of the Church? I said the first part of the argument applied to England as well as Wales, but that the second part of the argument distinctly did not apply to England.

*MR. PLUNKET: We have a second edition of the learned thesis of the hon. Member, but I do not think it makes much difference. He has now stated with much greater brevity the first part of it, and the second part I venture to challenge. But, whatever the reason was, I rather imagine that the reading of the hon. Member's speech could not have been received this morning with great enthusiasm either by the constituents to whom he had given the pledge, or by those friends of his with whom he holds such agreeable relations amongst the dignitaries of the Church of England. I do not intend, in my remarks this evening, to make any attempt to go over the general ground which has been traversed so well by others. There is only one set of arguments brought forward in support of this Bill as to which I should like to be permitted to say a few words. I mean those arguments which are derived from what is called the Irish precedent, and as I, of course, may speak in a certain sense at first hand, on some of these points, at all events, and as extraordinary misrepresentations have been made upon all of them, I trust the House will permit me for a short time to endeavour to throw some side-lights upon those statements. The Irish precedent is made use of in various ways. In the first place, the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland is presented to the public, and the English people are called upon to admire the extraordinary success and excellence of the Church and its members. Then there comes a transformation, and in the second scene the ministers and members of the Church of Ireland are exhibited in the character of the awful example to show how much of pilfering and plundering may be done in the national property, as it is called, of the Church. And then, again, the fact that Parliament did, in 1869, Disestablish the Irish Church is cited as a conclusive argument, which renders all further reasoning unnecessary for the policy and principles of this Bill. But, strangest of all, it is said that the position of the Church of England has been strengthened by the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and that is held out as an inducement to members of the Church of England, who might otherwise hesitate, to join in this Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. As to the first of these propositions, namely, the success which has been achieved by the Irish Church, certainly I shall not endeavour in the smallest degree to depreciate the credit which is given to my Church brethren in Ireland for the courage with which they encountered the blow which seemed destined to crush them, and for the energy with which they have struggled to their feet again. By great patience, by great generosity, by benefactions, by willing services gratuitously rendered to their Church, often by great self-sacrifice, the members of the Disestablished Church in Ireland have succeeded, I am proud to say, in carrying on with undiminished vigour the services of their Church, and they have also managed to provide for it a modest Endowment. [*Cheers.*] I heard a cheer from hon. Gentlemen opposite. I suppose that was meant to imply that all these benefits had accrued as a result of the Irish Church Act, for which the Irish Church should be thankful. Can anything be more absurd? When the Irish Church started on its new career, all that they could scrape together out of the fragments of the property which had been taken away from it, by economy and by self-denial, was a sum which, if capitalised, would be considerably less than one million sterling. Since then, by the voluntary contribution of its members between four and five millions have been added to that sum. But I must explain that the words of Irish Churchmen, speaking in satisfaction of the work they have been able to do, speaking with hope for the future, have again and again been quoted by the supporters of Disestablishment as if the members of the Irish Church who used these words were witnesses to a desire that a similar measure should be meted out to the Church in this country. Nothing could be more untrue. No doubt many members of the Irish Church, remembering the position in which they were placed in 1869, and what has since happened, readily admit that what has followed since 1869 has not been an unmixed evil. Some of the more sanguine ministers, of whom the Archbishop of Dublin, my brother, to whom the learned Solicitor General referred last night, is, perhaps, the strongest type, set very high the advantages as compared with the disadvantages. A much larger number of Churchmen in Ireland hold the opposite opinion; but, whatever opinion they may hold as to that, to tell them that they have anything to be grateful for in their present position to the Act of 1869 seems an absurdity, and, furthermore, I do not believe, whatever opinions they may hold upon that subject, there is one in a thousand but sympathises with the Church of England in its present difficulties and wishes it well; and I am sure there is not one who has studied this Bill, or knows anything of its provisions, but would say as I say now, that under such a measure as is now proposed to this House for the English Church in Wales, such a degree of success as they have obtained in Ireland would have been absolutely impossible. May I say one word with reference to the quotation which the Solicitor General made last night from a charge which was delivered in 1882 by my brother, who was then Bishop of Meath? By the courtesy of the Solicitor General I saw the paper from which he was reading, and observed that it was one of the leaflets published by the Liberation Society, and I should not be surprised to find that the passage was torn from its context. It is a fact that in recent years the Archbishop of Dublin has had again and again to write to the newspapers to protest against the use which was made of words of his by taking them away from the natural collocation in which they stood. I am quite willing, however, to take the extract as it stands. It is a passage evidently spoken in the light of the Land League agitation in 1882, and he said—

> "By ways that we should never have selected for ourselves, our Church has been prepared to abide the fury of the storm."

I do not see that there is anything inconsistent in that: and at the end he says—

> "Now, however, the very disaster which seemed to threaten our downfall has been overruled for our good."

What contradiction is there in treating an Act of Parliament as a national sin and describing it as a disaster? It is most unfair, I must say, the way these pamphlets are cooked up, and the way in which these garbled, these misleading, these lying pamphlets are put forth. But I pass away from that. I desire to point out one or two differences between the spirit and the method of the Act of 1869 and the Bill now before the House. The main difference between the two measures is in the matter of commutation and compounding. The power of commuting and compounding contained in the Irish Church Act was what really enabled the Irish Church to escape from absolute beggary and ruin. What was the scheme of commutation which is now put aside as something quite unworthy of consideration? Why, it was simply this. It gave us no new Endowments, nothing was given to us except the bare value of the life interests of the clergy who chose to commute, and 12 per cent. added in consideration for the State being relieved of collection and management. There was no obligation on the clergy to commute if they did not choose; but the scheme enabled the Church body to constitute itself into a kind of insurance society for the purpose of securing to the Incumbents entitled to those annuities the payment of what was due to them. We also received what was given to us by our own clergy—namely, their services—and it was in that way that the Church body was enabled to set its house in order again. The Church being thus provided with the services of its ministers was in a position to make the best they could of the capital sum, and being advised by able financiers who gave their services willingly and gratuitously, they were able judiciously to invest on good conditions the sum which was paid to them. In the meantime private benefactions were allowed to accumulate, in order to make a fund for the carrying on in future of the services of the Church. But the framers of this Act have pro ceeded on exactly the opposite course. They have merely preserved the life interests of the clergymen. There is control given to the representative body. There is no opportunity for compounding, and, therefore, what must follow is this—that it will be absolutely impossible for the Disestablished Church in Wales, if this Bill passes, to make any provision for parishes falling vacant. In some instances a number of parishes may soon lose their clergymen, but in other cases, perhaps for 40 or 50 years, the clergymen may live on and become old. There will be no means of removing them, and they will remain to the end of their lives. And so the Church in Wales will be condemned to die out parish by parish. Its energies will be crippled, its power of reorganising itself will be paralysed, and it will be left to bleed to death. *Saigner à blanc* is literally the fate reserved for this religious body, for whose future Ministers express so much benevolence. When I heard the Home Secretary explain the reasons for the course which is now adopted in preference to that which was embodied in the Irish Church Act, and when I heard him say, as a sufficient reason for departing from that precedent, that if the State were to get into its hands a large sum of money it really would not know what to do with it;—that there would be the greatest danger that it would be squandered and frittered away, I could not help asking myself, was there ever such a feeble insufficient explanation as that? I could not help feeling that the spirit which inspired those who framed this Bill was of quite a different character from the motives which the right hon. Gentleman professes. Yes, Sir! The framers of this Bill have studied carefully the provisions of the Irish Church Act for the purpose, apparently, of finding out how it was that the Irish Church escaped its fate, and for the purpose of taking care that the Welsh Church shall not save its life in the same way. I say it is the most cruel proposal that could possibly be made, and it is supported by the most frivolous excuses. When I compare the provisions of this Bill with the Irish Church Act, when I see how the right hon. Gentleman who framed that Act really tried, as he said, to temper what he thought was justice with mercy, and when I contrast it with the policy and provisions of this Bill, I am reminded of the old saying that "Love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave." There is only one other difference between the Act of 1869 and this Bill to which I wish at present to call attention. It is in the treatment which is awarded to the curates. I should have thought that, if there were any persons who would have been entitled to consideration—such consideration as was granted by the framers of the Irish Church Act of 1869—it would have been the unfortunate young men who will have all their prospects in life blighted if this Bill is passed. And what is the excuse? A curious thing about this Bill is that, mean as are the provisions of it, the reasons which are given for them are still more unworthy. What is the excuse given? It is that certain curates in the case of the Church of Ireland were paid too much money. The President of the Board of Trade said there were many who entered the ministry for the express purpose of obtaining compensation. Of course, if that were true, one would say that the natural inference would be that you should make provision in this measure against such an abuse of the intention of Parliament. But what is the truth of this charge? It is an old charge that is made. The whole of this sweeping charge seems to me to involve an indictment of the framers of the Act of 1869; of the Commissioners who administered it, as well as against those clergymen of the Church whom it affected. It depends upon this—that, whereas there were in July, 1869, 720 curates in the Irish Church, in July, 1871, which was the period at which these gratuities were paid to them, the number was 921, a difference of 201. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman who made this charge the other day das read the Debate which took place in this House in 1875 on this subject. I gather the right hon. Gentleman has not, and yet he has made this charge! Will the House credit it that a Minister comes forward to make an argument in support of this provision, and bases it on a sweeping charge against a certain set of clergymen who were then in the Church of Ireland, many of them are still, and yet has never taken the trouble to inquire into the truth of this charge? He gave no proof; he mentioned no names. Fortunately, however, this particular charge, together with the rest of the indictment for such peculation against the Irish Church, the whole of this case was tried out on the floor of this House at the time when all these circumstances were fresh in the recollection of Members, and when it was possible to give particulars and to answer the charges when made. I remember well the Debate, because I took part in it. Mr. Jenkins, the then Member for Dundee, moved for a Commission to inquire into what he considered the maladministration of the Irish Church Act, but so much had Mr. Jenkins apparently been misinformed by whoever instructed him, that the seconder of his Motion—an Irish Nationalist Member of that time—actually had to throw over the mover, and he said he felt sure himself that when the case was inquired into it would be found that there had been great exaggeration. The charges were replied to by Mr. Mulholland and by Mr. Gibson, now Lord Ashbourne, on behalf of the Irish Church, and also by Mr. Hugh Law, who himself drafted the Irish Church Act, who had been Attorney General to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, and who after this event I am now speaking of was his Lord Chancellor in Ireland. Mr. Law answered all the accusations that had been made, and as to this particular charge he said:—

> "With regard to the question of commutation on the part of the curates, it was only fair to remember that a number of young men were qualifying themselves to serve as curates at the time when the Irish Church Act suddenly passed, and a short period was allowed to enable them to become ordained, and so to be entitled to compensation. Under such circumstances 201 could not by any means be considered a large number for the year and a half that intervened before the 1st of January, 1871."

There was a Division, and the figures were 148 and 34, or a majority of 118 against Mr. Jenkins. When men have been tried here at the time when it was possible to make a defence against these accusations, and when men have been acquitted under the circumstances I have described, I ask, is it not a scandalous thing for a Minister to come forward and, in order to trump up a defence for the miserable and mean provisions of this Bill, to make such charges as that? There is another view of the question which I should like to deal with for a short time, and it is, in my opinion, the most important aspect of this Bill. It is its bearing on the wider and greater question of Disestablishment of the Church of England. It has been stated in the course of these Debates that the Church of England was made stronger by the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and that is used as an argument to lovers of the English Church that they should not hesitate to support this Bill. In 1869 it was argued by the opponents of the Irish Church Bill, that, if the principle of Disestablishment were conceded in the case of the Irish Church, that concession would be made use of for the purpose of attacking the Establishment in England and especially of attacking the Establishment in Wales. It was answered by the Liberal Party of that day that there was no foundation for such a fear; that the cases were totally different, and that the Church of England would be strengthened by the sacrifice of the Irish Church, and that the forces of Disestablishment would be checked on the shores of Britain. I could quote many instances to illustrate my meaning, but there is one instance so picturesque, so pregnant of warning on this subject, that I hope the House will allow me to read a few words. They were spoken by a man since passed away, but then a very distinguished scholar and divine, and who was himself a Bishop of the Church in Wales. Some other sentences from the same speech are, I am sure, fresh in the recollection of Members of this House, because they were quoted in praise of apostolic poverty by the present Prime Minister in his great oration at Cardiff. Dr. Thirlwall was Bishop of St. David's in 1869 when the Irish Church Act was passed. He was one of the few Bishops who were prepared to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords. He had heard the warning I have spoken of that the principle of Disestablishment would probably be carried from the Irish shores to his own diocese in Wales, and this is what he said:—

> "I am thankful to the noble Earl who addressed the House last but one yesterday for

relieving me from the necessity of touching on another topic which I should otherwise have been bound to advert to. I mean the argument founded on the fancied analogy of the case of Wales to that of Ireland; but, far from there being an analogy, there is the strongest contrast between the two, not only in the fact that there is no broad channel flowing between England and Wales, but also in the circumstances that the whole population of Wales are of one way of thinking on religion, and do not differ from the Established Church in any essential point in a greater degree than the members of the Established Church differ from one another."

So, the Bishop said, that without any hesitation or scruple, he voted for the Second Reading of the Bill. The strong contrast is now ignored; the fancied analogy which the Bishop ridiculed is made the basis of this Bill. And what of the broad channel? Certainly there is no broad channel between the four dioceses of Wales and the rest of England; but the hand of the destroyer has found no difficulty in carving out, parish by parish, as with a sharp dissecting knife, from the living body of the Church of England, those portions which are to be included within what we are told now is the circumscription of the Principality of Wales. And what about this extraordinary unanimity of the people of Wales? Why, in the same speech at Cardiff, the present Prime Minister told us that the Church in Wales was an alien Church, and that its clergy, instead of being a means of reconciliation, were a cause of hostility amongst the people of Wales! But let me press this argument further. Is it or is it not a fact that this Bill is advocated in the interest of the cause of general Disestablishment throughout the country? I think it would be easy to adduce a great weight of authority upon that subject. The late Prime Minister on one occasion said that so intimately united were the different dioceses of Wales and England that it would be impossible to distinguish between them. The present Leader of this House has said that if you raise the question of the Church Establishment in Wales you raise the whole question. We have heard in this Debate one very striking confirmation of that view. The hon. and learned Member for Leeds, in his most interesting and attractive, and very frank speech, said:—

> "We who want Disestablishment altogether, and we form the majority on this side, think you may establish the precedent in Wales, and next we shall be quite content to accept a graduated application of it to the northern dioceses of England."

The case is stated even more clearly in a publication which I think must be accepted by many hon. Members as an authority upon the subject—"The Case for Disestablishment." I have no means of knowing the exact numbers of the supporters of the Liberation Society. It claims to have on its side a majority of the Liberal Members of the House, and I observed the other day that at its annual breakfast there were many Members of Parliament, including two Members of the Government, and that several Members of the Government, including one Cabinet Minister, sent letters of apology and, I presume, of sympathy. This festive meeting was in very good heart and well satisfied with the progress of this Bill, claiming it as an earnest of future success, and frankly stating that they had never concealed what their ultimate intentions were. That brings us face to face with the gravest question—the most important question—that ever has been, or ever can be, submitted to Parliament. It is no less a question than this—Is the House willing now to lend itself to the first step of a process by which it is hoped to bring about at no distant time the Disestablishment of the Church of England? This is the first time that a responsible Government has asked the House of Commons to commit itself by the Second Reading of a Bill to the principle of breaking into the Establishment of the Church and of taking away from it those Endowments which have been given to it by the generosity and piety of Englishmen for centuries. This particular Bill is not framed exactly upon the model suggested in the works of the Liberation Society, but I know it is part of their Programme, and that the arguments used in support of it are the arguments which they use in support of larger measures. Therefore, I say that no man can blind himself to the fact that in supporting this Bill he is doing what he can to advance the larger measure. I know there are many Members who, the more clearly that is laid out, the more strongly will they be in favour of this Bill. But I would venture to appeal to others in this House and to many men outside who will have the decision of this question when it is submitted to the judgment of the country—men who are still attached followers of the Church of England—to ponder and to consider what is the nature of the business on which they are invited to enter, what is the magnitude of the movement to which they are now asked to give an impetus. There may be some who hold that the influence of religion, whether Established or Disestablished, Endowed or Disendowed, is useless if not injurious to the State. There may be others who, from motives of rash desire for revolutionary change, or perhaps from baser motives of envy and jealousy, support this measure. I am sure there are many who are themselves devoted to the cause of religion, who honestly believe that cause is better served when there is no Establishment and no Endowment. But there are others who may be hesitating as to whether they will throw in their lot with the further progress of this movement, and to them I would make an appeal to consider what is the Church of England. I myself belonged to another and a Disestablished community, but, looking upon the Church of England, I see that by its Endowments it is enabled to bring the teaching and the ministration of religion clothed with the influence of learning to the educated, clothed with the influence of charity to the poor, continually, without interruption, in every parish in the land. I also hold that the mere fact of setting religion on high in a place at once of honour and of submission to the law must have a great influence on the minds of multitudes of men. Seeing the position in which religion is thus placed, they yield to its teachings, and there is instilled into the minds of the people of this country, as generation after generation grow up, obedience to the teachings of religion, obedience to law and to authority, which, in my judgment, is a most valuable makeweight in the minds of a free and a freedom-loving people. I believe, also, that the influence of the clergy of the Established Church on the whole works largely in the same direction. It would be easy to pick out individual cases here and there of ministers who are causes, not of advantage, but of injury to their order and to their flocks, and I am aware that there have been epochs in the history of the English Church when there was much indifference, but looking backwards over the whole of her annals, weighing the good and the bad, making all allowances, and contrasting this country with other countries where there are no Established Churches, or where Established Churches cannot so well bear investigation and judgment, I am bound to say that the Church of England has stood, and still stands, as a great aid and safeguard to society, and as a glorious monument to the reverent character of a free but essentially religious people. On these broad grounds of matter-of-fact and practical advantage to the State, I will resist at every point to the utmost of my ability such a measure as this. But, Sir, in such high and delicate matters we cannot wisely or justly neglect other considerations, or leave out of sight feeling and even sentiment. It has been truly said by a philosophical and impartial historian of our day that—

> "It is not enough to show that some other system may be theoretically better. To tear up by the roots any part of those institutions of an old country as have grown with it from the beginning, which have become part of its being, is in itself an evil."

The Church of England is no foreign, no exotic institution. Long ago its form was fashioned by Englishmen for themselves. Its wealth and its endowments were given to it and have been accumulated by Englishmen for the teaching and the administration of their own religion. From age to age the Church has shaped and moulded itself to meet the wants and wishes of the people. Its old cathedrals and its abbey churches have been identified with the solemn commemoration of every great event in the history of the people. They hold the memorials of the mighty dead, and in the shadows of their walls are folded the faded and tattered banners borne by those Englishmen whose valour and endurance have defended the freedom and achieved the greatness of the nation. Yes, and stronger in the minds of the people than the pomp and pride of these are other associations which gather in the churches and crowd into the churchyards of this ancient institution. As one generation after another has come and gone, there the most important, the happiest, the most sorrowful events of life have been solemnised by Christian services—the baptisms, the marriages, the burials.

There side by side the rich and the poor, the men and the women, and the little children have been laid in the parish graveyards of the Church of England. As I look upon it I see in it the most singular, the most characteristic, the oldest, and the noblest of all the great institutions of this land; and I would say to the Englishmen of to-day, who love that Church: "Abide by it, defend it! It is the Church of your fathers for a thousand years. It is the richest, the most glorious, treasure of all your great inheritance."

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds): I received it as a Parliamentary tradition, from one who entered this House in 1813, that of all the Parliamentary orators of the time none were equal to the first Lord Plunket, and I think all who have heard the speech and the peroration of the Member for Dublin University will gladly admit that the genius of Lord Plunket is not extinguished in his grandson. A portion of that speech was devoted to a reference to language used by his distinguished brother, the present Archbishop of Dublin, unquestionably the most governing spirit in the Disestablished Church of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman said that the speech to which reference has been made was made in 1882, at a time of high agitation on the Land Question, but in 1892, on November 8, the Archbishop said:—

> "When I count up the advantages which have followed Disestablishment; when I think of the renewed strength and vitality which our Church has derived from the admission of the laity to an active and responsible participation in her counsels, in the disposition of her patronage, and in the financial departments of her work; when I observe the spirit of unity and mutual respect which has been engendered by the ordeal of our common adversity and the increased loyalty and love which are being daily shown to their Mother Church by those who have had to make some sacrifice on her behalf; when I remember, too, the freedom from agrarian complications which our disconnection from all questions of tithe and and tithe rent-charge has brought about, and the more favourable attitude as regards our influence upon the surrounding population which we occupy because of our severance from any State connection—when I remember all this counterpoise of advantage which we enjoy in our new and independent position, and when I try to hold the balance evenly and weigh the losses and the gains of the whole, I say boldly and without reserve that, in my opinion at least, the gain outweighs the loss."

It is not for me to settle this fraternal controversy, but I hope, before the Debate closes, some Member of the House who belongs to the Disestablished Church will address himself to it. It is inevitable that most of those who support this Bill in this Debate are Nonconformists in religion. My only title to intervene in this Debate is, that I am, by strong life-long convictions, a member of the Church of England, and if I am told that it is an anomalous position for me, a Churchman, to defend this Bill, I take leave to reply that it is not more anomalous than that of a Dissenter engaged in bolstering up an Establishment. I refer to the late Home Secretary the Member for East Birmingham (Mr. Matthews), who has properly spoken of himself as a Dissenter. The right hon. Gentleman is, as we all know, a devoted Member of the august and authoritative Communion, and he is, I venture to say, a stickler to the extremest point for the spiritual prerogatives of his own Church. He is bound to regard not only Nonconformists, but the members of the Church of England, as heterodox and schismatical; and yet he comes forward with all the resources of his ingenuity to tender support to an Established heresy and an Endowed schism. I thought, however, that I detected in certain passages signs that the right hon. Gentleman appreciated the situation. He "hopped with airy and fastidious levity" over the the Disestablishment part of the question by, and devoted himself to Disendowment. One word only as to the vivacious discourse of the Member for Plymouth. The humorous part of it was beyond praise, but when he rose to a rather solemn altitude his language was extremely strong. Looking back to 1869, and after the experience of a quarter of a century, he declared that Disestablishment was nothing less than "a national sin." That is a strong doctrine for the hon. Member, when he recollects that Lord Salisbury, by his vote, was an author of that sin. There is an interesting passage in the life of Archbishop Tait which throws some light on these transactions, and by it my hon. Friend will see that it would not be too much to say that that Bill could not have been passed through the Tory Opposition in the House of Lords but for the influence exercised by Lord Salisbury. The hon. Member for Plymouth is a personal friend of my own, and my advice to him in all sincerity is to take heed of what he is about. The time may possibly arrive when he will be asked to take an important place in an Administration presided over by that national sinner. Let my hon. Friend beware lest, by accepting that tempting offer, he is led into the uncomfortable position described by the Apostle of being a partaker of other men's sins. The right hon. Member for West Bristol, in the Debate on the First Reading of the Bill, made an earnest and cogent appeal to Members supporting the Government to put themselves "in the place of those who believe that Disestablishment is a wrong to the State and Disendowment a wicked plunder of the Church." It is not a very easy task to which to invite a Nonconformist—a Nonconformist who has been brought up from his cradle to look on Church establishment as in itself a mischief and Church endowment as at best a perilous boon; but it is a very easy task for myself, brought up in the precincts of the Established Church, and who has learnt to regard the Establishment as, if not of the essence of the Church, still as an inseparable incident of it, and to look on Church Endowment as being a valuable possession. There are two considerations that make this comparatively easy to-night. Fortunately there has been conceded a certain amount of common ground, and there are one or two considerations and arguments which used to figure largely in earlier Debates which have disappeared in this one. We have heard from neither side anything of the language of Erastianism, which, in the words of the right hon. Member for Midlothian, was thus described:—

> "If we follow the Erastian idea it does not matter what god we worship, or how we worship him, provided we derive both belief and worship from the Civil Ruler, and hold them subject to his orders."

Then, I think, we have heard nothing from the supporters or the opponents of the Bill tending to the revival of the old-fashioned doctrine that the Church of England was created and endowed by Henry VIII. some time about the Reformation. [*Opposition cries of* "Cardiff."] I said in this Debate. On both sides of the House there seems to be a common agreement to accept that doctrine of the origin of the Church of England which is thus given in the words of Professor Freeman—

> "The conversion of England took place gradually, when there was no such thing as an English nation capable of a national act. The land was still cut up into small kingdoms, and Kent had been Christian for some generations, at a time when Sussex still remained heathen."

In short, the break at the Reformation, which we all admit, was, in my view, rather a doctrinal than a structural break—I mean it appertained to the doctrine of the Church of England rather than to the framework of its organisation; and I believe the present Archbishop of Canterbury may claim to be the direct descendant of Augustine and Cranmer. It was a gradual establishment; it grew up with our national life; and it is impossible to lay a finger on the time or place at which the Church was Established or Endowed. Everyone will admit the legal privilege and prescription of the Church of England, which reached its height about the beginning of this century by various growths; but I shall not be wrong, perhaps, in taking 1818, for that was the year in which Parliament voted £1,000,000 to the building and endowment of churches of the Church of England in populous places. I take that year as representing the high-water mark of the Establishment and privilege of the Church of England. It is interesting to see how soon the course of Disestablishment began. Bishop Woodford, addressing his clergy in 1881, said:—

> "Disestablishment has been proceeding for the last 50 years."

First, in 1828, there was the repeal of the Test and Corporations Act; second, there was the Roman Catholic emancipation; third, the alteration of the marriage law; fourth, the withdrawal of matrimonial and testamentary jurisdiction from the Ecclesiastical Courts; then came a most epoch-making change—the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission, which for the first time treated the properties of the sees as a whole, and placed them under lay administration;

sixth, the abolition of Church rates, the admission of Dissenters to membership, and then to office, in the Universities, and the admission of Dissenters to burial with their own rites in national churchyards. It may be asked, however, if so much has been already done in the way of Disestablishment, if this gradual process has been carried so far, why do we desire to complete the process, to make that Disestablishment, which at present is only partial, absolutely final? What, then, are our objections to the present system, and why do we desire to complete this work of Disestablishment? The primary objection which a free Churchman must entertain to the principle of Establishment is because Establishment is invidious and unjust as between one Church and another. As long as there was only one religion for England and the whole Western world the Establishment was tolerable, even inevitable; but now religions are counted, I believe, by hundreds; and the preferred position of the Established Church seems to be unjust and invidious to all those who are not of the Establishment. Then we hold that it is bad for the Church. State alliance, in the judgment of free Church men, tends to make a Church hard, proud, worldly, and unspiritual; and engenders in ministers, who are also State officials, a spirit too often hostile to the social and political independence of those placed under their charge; it tends also to create what I may call without impropriety an uncommonly healthy appetite for the loaves and fishes. Thirdly, it subjects the Church, in matters which most vitally affect her faith and worship, to the control of a Parliament not composed of members of the Church only, nor even of orthodox Dissenters, but containing among its representatives Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics. I say "Turk" advisedly, for I believe there is a noble Lord in another place who at one time even embraced the Mahomedan religion. But, at any rate, it is a Parliament composed of men, many of whom cannot be supposed by any possible stretch of charity to have the slightest sympathy for any of the formularies or discipline of the Church. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester, whose absence to-night through illness I regret, made a reference the other night to this important point. He always speaks on these subjects with an earnestness which commands respect, and disarms, to some extent, our criticism. The noble Lord said:—

> "A good deal was said about the trammels, chains, and fetters which were supposed to hang around the Church. Was it true that there were chains and fetters? It was said, 'Oh, you cannot change your doctrine or your ritual without the leave of Parliament.' But did they want to change doctrine or ritual? The doctrines of the Church were constant and did not change; and, as far as they could, they desired that the ritual should be constant too."

Yes, that is all very well, and to a certain extent I agree with the noble Lord. But my point is that, however well we may be satisfied with the formularies of the Church as they exist, Parliament can alter them over our heads. What is the outward aspect of the Church but the product of a series of Acts of uniformity which laid aside local uses and substituted one national use for the whole of the Kingdom? In our time Parliament has given us shortened services, a new Lectionary, and the Public Worship Regulation Act. It was Parliament in 1874 which, in its pure zeal for the good of the Church as a spiritual body, transferred the ancient archiepiscopal jurisdiction to the Judge of the Divorce Court. Those are changes which have taken place by the authority of Parliament; but there was another change more far-reaching which did not actually take place, but which was seriously contemplated. Under the auspices of Archbishop Tait in 1872 a controversy arose about the Athanasian Creed, and such a storm arose about the policy of doing away with that creed that the question was dropped, but only as a matter of expediency. No one questioned the full legal competence of Parliament to treat that creed as it liked. If the Athanasian Creed could be so treated, there was nothing to prevent a similar handling of the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed; and hereafter, perhaps, under Puritan or Latitudinarian guidance, the noble Lord may find points belonging to the very *arcana* of the Church—the matter of the Eucharist or the formula of ordination—changed by Parliament. I submit that Establishment is a source of spiritual weakness, and Disestablishment would unquestionably be, as the Archbishop of Dublin found out, a source of spiritual strength for the Disestablished minister. In this connexion it is inevitable that I should recall a conversation I had with a noble Lord, in his time a pillar of the Liberal Party, who, in speaking of political subjects, pulled me up when I came to the question of Disestablishment. I asked "Why not?" and he replied:—"As long as the Church is Established we can kick the parsons, but once Disestablish it and perhaps the parsons would kick us." That is what I venture to call the doctrine of Church and State in a nutshell. Then with regard to the voluntary agencies of the Church in towns. The hon. Member for the University of Oxford poured some gentle contempt upon those who talked about the mission work of the Church in towns as being unendowed. In such cases the endowment is commonly £100 or £200 a year—just enough to maintain the clergyman in charge. The whole of the rest of the maintenance of the Church and its service is supported by voluntary contributions made through the medium of weekly offerings. That is what I mean by a voluntary system, and it is where the Church works on these lines in the working-class neighbourhoods of large towns that she has the largest authority and influence, and even passionate affection from, those who attend her services. Then it has been said: Even granting these things are true, the Establishment is good and even necessary in order that it may guide the national conscience aright in the great issues of public controversy where the path of morality cuts across the path of politics. How does our Established Church stand from this point of view? What did she do through her accredited representatives in the matter of the abolition of slavery and in the matter of the mitigation of our bloody Penal Code? What did she do towards providing cheap food for the people? what for the supreme interest of Peace against War? and what was the attitude of the Church of England, through the bulk of her ministers, when the Eastern question arose, and England was invited to take up arms in defence of the Mahommedan power? These being our objections to the Establishment, how do we propose to complete the process of Disestablishment? In the first place, we propose that the Bishops should lose their seats in the House of Lords, and I do not think any single spiritual or moral cause is likely to be the loser by that change. Then, of course, the right of lay presentation to religious benefices must go; it must no longer be even possible for a most notoriously debauched man to provide a pastor for Christian congregations. Furthermore, the coercive jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts must cease. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for East Birmingham (Mr. Henry Matthews), spoke of the synod, the setting up of which it is proposed to sanction by the Bill as "a strange body consisting of clergy and laity." I feel very unfit to discuss questions of ecclesiastical polity with the right hon. Gentleman; but if he will bear with me, I assure him this combination of laity and clergy is not so unique a combination as he seems to think it is. There is an interesting and ancient and authoritative work called the Acts of the Apostles, and that I commend to the right hon. Gentleman. He will find, that when ritual disturbances arose in the primitive Church, the clergy were reinforced by the laity. There we have a system of Church government which it is proposed in this Bill to sanction. Bishop Moberly said:—

> "It has been generally held by theologians (excepting always those of the high Roman school) that the retrospective acceptance of the whole Church, including lay people as well as clergy, is necessary in order to give Conciliar decrees their full Œcumenical character and weight. . . . If the assent of the lay people is thus necessary, even in the highest of all instances—the settlement of the faith—it is matter, not of principle, but of convenience and wisdom, to decide at what points, and in what proportion, this Christian counsel should be listened to and acknowledged."

That is precisely the line on which this Bill is drawn. Now I leave the subject of Disestablishment and come to that of Disendowment. Three reservations have been notoriously made in this Bill. There is the reservation of modern gifts to the Church; and if the question is asked why a particular year is chosen, I confess I am not very much concerned to defend that or any other particular year. The essential point is this—

the Church will be allowed to retain all that has been given to her by private donors since she has been theologically and spiritually what she is now. Surely no candid critic can deny that the theological change made by the Reformation was a significant and a profound one. Surely the 39 Articles embodied an entirely different system of theology from that which prevailed in the pre-Reformation Church, and I cannot convince myself that the persons who made gifts to the Church in medieval times would have bequeathed their land had they known that, as a body, the Church was about to rebel against the see of Peter, which they regarded as the one source of authority and orthodoxy. It is said if you grant this the Church is bound to give up all that came to her before she became theologically what she is now. I need not go into details as to our second reservation—viz., that in regard to sacred buildings. Our third reservation is as to vested interests. We have heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin something as to the creation of new vested interests during the last year of the expiring Irish Establishment. I confess the views he has advanced are not those which I have gathered from other competent authorities; but with respect to the great residue of this property—the great bulk that is not touched by these three reservations—will any one challenge the right of the State to deal with it? It cannot be said to be unprecedented. Shakespeare, who knew everything, including what was going to happen as well as what did happen, describes a scene in the reign of Henry V. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely appear together, they walk side by side. Canterbury says:—

"My lord, I'll tell you,—that self Bill is urg'd,
Which, in the eleventh year o' the last king's reign,
Was like, and had indeed against us past,
But that the scambling and unquiet time
Did push it out of further question.
Ely.—But how, my Lord, shall we resist it now?
Canterbury.—It must be thought on. If it pass against us,
We lose the better half of our possession:
For all the temporal lands, which men devout
By testament have given to the Church,
Would they strip from us; being valued thus,—
As much as would maintain, to the king's honour,
Full fifteen earls and fifteen hundred knights, . . .
And, to relief of lazars, and weak age,
Of indigent faint souls, past corporal toil,
A hundred alms-houses right well supplied.

. . . . . . . .

Ely.—This would drink deep.
Canterbury.—'Twould drink the cup and all."

Can anybody read that, and, comparing it with the present agitations of the Episcopal Bench of England and Wales, doubt the doctrine of Episcopal succession? That was one precedent—a poetic and Shakespearian precedent—for putting Church property to secular uses. I come to another—the use made of the Abbey Lands. I think history records the cases of families who have risen to greatness and affluence on the ruins of the Abbeys; and it is an interesting constitutional consideration to bear in mind that, in virtue of wealth so acquired, some of the heads of their families obtained peerages and then transmitted their honours to their descendants, who now sit in serried ranks ready to throw out, when they get the opportunity, a Bill designed to carry just a stage further a process to which they themselves owe so much. I will venture, in connexion with the subject of Abbey Lands, to give to the House two instances, one of the way in which Church property should not be dealt with, and the other of the way in which it should be dealt with. If any hon. Member, on leaving Palace Yard, will turn to the right, and walk less than a mile, he will come to the old Convent Garden of Westminster Abbey, now devoted to uses which are certainly not sacred, and paying tribute and toll to a secular landlord. That is an instance of the way in which Church property should not be dealt with. But if any hon. Member will walk to the left, to the Precincts of Westminster Abbey, he will find under the shadow of that pile, housed in the very buildings and enriched by the wealth of the old Benedictines, a famous school of learning, with eleemosynary provisions for poor scholars, and connected by a system of Exhibitions with Trinity and Christ Church. In the erection of Westminster School or the foundation of Westminster

Abbey the House will, I think, agree is the way in which ecclesiastical property should be treated. Hon. Members who are conversant with the terminology of the theology of the Catholic Church know that the test of a man's sincerity was found in the way he discharged the corporal works of mercy—feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, visiting the sick; and I for one sincerely and honestly believe that money so applied is better, more reasonably, and more Christianly used than in maintaining a choir or in decorating an altar. It may be said that all these are general considerations. I have welcomed the fact that every one who has taken part in this Debate has agreed to treat the Welsh Church as a subject that cannot be profitably handled without reference to its relations with the Church of England. It may be said that these are general considerations that make for Disestablishment everywhere, and it may be asked why apply them to Wales? For this reason—as long as the people of any nation are willing to bear the yoke of Establishment, it is not the business of people outside to try to lift the yoke from off their shoulders. But when the people of any nation have shown that they dislike that yoke, and desire to be relieved from it, it is a cardinal principle of the Liberalism, as laid down by the Duke of Devonshire in 1877, for the Liberal Party to come to their assistance in removing that yoke. I will say nothing about the Church of England at this moment. No expression of national sentiment has been given in connexion with that Church. The answer was given in Ireland years ago. Scotland seems to hold her voice in suspense, but in regard to Wales no such doubt can arise. I am not going into that dangerous land of percentages and averages as to the congregations, communicants, and scholars of the different creeds, for the best of all possible reasons, that there seems to be no agreement between any two Members on either side of the House as to the figures. The question of minority or majority does not appeal to me in the slightest degree. I believe the Nonconformists are a large majority of the Welsh people; but whether they are Nonconformists or Churchmen they have made up their minds to be rid of Establishment. The right hon. Gentleman opposite mentioned the marriage test. He said there were more people married in the Churches than in the Chapels. But that might be explained by the fact that a certain number of Nonconformists, owing to descent or to old associations, have recourse to the Church to be married, as is constantly the case in England. But one thing that is indisputable, one figure on which no doubt can be thrown, is the fact that Wales returns an overwhelming majority of her Representatives pledged on the question of Disestablishment. Surely the least revolutionary of politicians who ever lived was the late Lord Derby, and he, speaking at Blackburn on the 10th of October 1885, said:—

> "I have long held, and am ready to avow it openly, that I do not believe that an Established Church—that is, the exclusive alliance of one religious denomination among many with the State—can be, in the long run, permanently maintained alongside of a system of really popular representation such as we have got now. Disestablishment and, at least partial, Disendowment must, in my mind, ultimately come, and if I were a parson or one of those laymen who identify themselves especially with ecclesiastical interests and ideas I should look rather to making the best terms possible while there is time than to resisting what is inevitable. But we are hardly ripe in England for that change. It is a very big one, and if we take it up now we may be quite sure that no other reform—and we have a good many on hand—can possibly get itself attended to. I think, therefore, that the decision which has been come to—to let the subject stand over for the moment, is a wise one. But if the representatives of Scotland desire the Disestablishment of their Church it is not for Englishmen to oppose them. And for myself, though I can speak for no one else, I consider that Wales has a strong claim to be separately dealt with. In Wales, as was the case in Ireland, Nonconformists form the bulk of the population."

There remains only argument for me to notice—an argument *ad terrorem*. It is said that if you take away these Endowments the villages will lapse into something like heathenism. I do not believe that. What I believe will happen is that one clergyman will have to serve two or three parishes. One of the most devoted and respected of the Bishops, the present Bishop of Lincoln, told me that that change is likely to become necessary in England in regard to rural dioceses. That would imply a wide use of lay ministrations in the service of the Church which can be discharged by laymen. But if the Church of England were, by a reduction in her ministers, to neglect the population of the villages, I know that the Nonconformists of England would step in and repair that neglect. Of course Disestablishment will entail some sacrifice and some loss to the members of the Church. It will mean that they are to have for the future the privilege of paying for their own religion, and that the richer members of the Communion will have to pay for the religious advantages of their poorer brethren. But it is a sacrifice that is worth making for the great boon which it will bring in its train. I am persuaded that it would be a proud and happy day for the Church when, in reply to the just boast of the Nonconformist Communions that they were "free born," she is able to say, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom." Yes, Sir, in that one word "freedom" lies the whole of our contention in this matter as it presents itself to members of the Established Church. We claim for the Church of which we are members, and just now especially for the Welsh branch of it, freedom from the control of those who do not believe her doctrines or share her worship; freedom alike from the trammels and allurements of a State alliance; freedom to discharge, in the uncorrupted simplicity of a pure devotion, that great spiritual commission which she holds, neither from Kings nor Parliament, but from the Church's Supreme and Invisible Head.

*Viscount WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.) said, the House had listened to an eloquent speech from his Friend the Member for North Beds. His hon. Friend was perfectly entitled as a Churchman to hold the views to which he had given expression in regard to the Church, though they were not the views of 99 out of every 100 of his brother Churchmen. He would not follow his hon. Friend over the wide field which he had covered in his speech, but he would put before the House, briefly, reasons why his hon. Friend's arguments were not conclusive, and why they were based on fallacies. But he had first to thank his hon. Friend for one thing he had done. His hon. Friend had conspired with the Home Secretary to throw over the Prime Minister. They had once and for all pricked that bubble, on the reputation of which the Liberationist Society had lived for fifty years, that the Church of England dated only from the Reformation. If his hon. Friend had sat where he (Viscount Wolmer) was he would have heard murmurs of dissent at that part of his speech. It was not for him to interfere in a quarrel between friends; but if his hon. Friend and the Home Secretary had any difficulty with their Liberationist followers on that point he could assure them that they would find for their defence a perfect armoury of weapons in all writers on the question from the Reformation to the historians of the Victorian age. He hoped, therefore, they might consider that controversy on that point was set at rest. He had not expected to hear from his hon. Friend what he considered to be a poor kind of argument, the argument of the loaves and fishes. What religious body was there that did not depend on loaves and fishes in the sense in which his hon. Friend had used the term? What religious body was there that did not depend on Endowments or voluntary contributions? and Endowments were but the capitalised value of the voluntary contributions of long ago. He now came to what he might call the main plank in the Disestablishment platform of his hon. Friend, who said that he was for Disestablishment because he was for freedom, and, as a Churchman, he objected to the Church being legislated for by Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics. The hon. Gentleman also said that Parliament could alter the creed, formularies, rites, and doctrines of the Church of England, and that he objected to any such power residing in Parliament. The answer to that was twofold. The creed, formularies, and rites of the Church now possessed were not the work of Parliament in the sense in which his hon. Friend used that expression; nor had that legislation been placed upon the Statute Book of this Realm, except by the registration of what Convocation was known to be in favour of for the Church, the whole of the doctrines and rites had authority of the governing body of the Church itself—namely, Convocation. There was, he knew, one exception, which had always been brought forward to prove the argument that the Church was resting on State-made Acts. It was the argument derived from the Acts one and two of the first year of Elizabeth. Those were the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, and he must ask the attention of the House to what might be rather a dry historical disquisition, because a great deal depended upon this argument. It was said that Parliament passed these Acts. He said that Parliament only registered the Acts of the Church, except in this one case. Why was not the Act of Supremacy assented to by the Lords Spiritual? Because that Act was not to make new legislation, but to restore legislation of Henry the Eighth, which, in the reign of Queen Mary, had been upset by Parliament, without the consent of any spiritual authority whatever—a purely State made Act, and the Bishops and Prelates, who had supported the original Acts in the reign of Henry the Eighth, had been dispossessed and driven away, and some of them burned at the stake. The result was, that when Elizabeth came to the Throne, all the places had been filled by staunch adherents of the Papacy, and no authority was needed to undo the work of the reign of Mary, which had never any ecclesiastical authority, but the same authority which, in defiance of ecclesiastically sanctioned acts in the reign of Henry the Eighth, had done it. That absolutely disproved the historical basis of the argument of his hon. Friend. As to the future, it might be true that this House had technically the power to alter the creed, formularies, and doctrines of the Church, but it was a power which this House would never dare to use, There was no Churchman in the land who had any fear of the action of that House, because the whole country knew that it would never dare to legislate for the Church against what the nation knew were the wishes, the opinions, and the conscientious convictions of the Church. If this House ever dared to try and force on the Church of England creeds in which her members did not believe, and which they repudiated, the members of the Church of England would have the power then to throw off what would be the yoke of the State which Parliament had imposed upon them, but which did not at present exist. He did not believe it ever would exist, because, although there were reforms in Church government which Churchmen would wish to see, he did not himself believe that public opinion would permit those in that House, who wanted to see the Church Disestablished, refuse all hearing to these reforms for the sake of allowing admitted abuses to continue to in order to forward the cause of Disestablishment. He saw sitting near him an hon. Member who, although a champion of Disestablishment and Disendowment, was yet a most honourable example; for, although he was in favour of that policy, he had declared he was never going to connive at the attempts of those who, in order forward their policy, would perpetuate admitted abuses in Church government. The example of the hon. Member would not lose force as time went on, because popular opinion was entirely on his side, and he did not believe it was in the power of Members of that House to keep the Church unreformed merely for the sake of their political ends. Speaking on the subject of Disendowment, his hon. Friend (Mr. G. Russell) said he did not believe it could be maintained that those Church people who had endowed the Church before the Reformation would ever have given their Endowments to the Church if they had known there was going to be a final breach with the Papacy. His hon. Friend was perfectly entitled to hold that view, but he differed from him absolutely, because, as the Home Secretary said the other day, no one could read the history of the Church of England without seeing that, for century after century, there was a struggle for national independence against Rome, sometimes with more and sometimes with less success; but always with unfaltering assertion on the part of the laity of the Church and many of the clergy that the Church of England was a Church by herself, in communion with Rome, but not dependent on or under the dominion of Rome. Churchmen, therefore, had a right to repudiate the argument of the hon. Member. But, suppose they admitted his view. His hon. Friend felt the difficulty of 1703, and said, in an airy way, that any date was adequate which made it quite certain that those who gave the Endowment were aware of the change that had taken place. But either these Endowments, since the days of Augustine, had been given to the same Church as existed now, or there was a point at which there was a change in that Church and endowments given before and since that time were to be placed in a different category. The hon. Member for Eccles (Mr. Roby) and the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Walton), who also felt the difficulty about the date of 1703, did not take the line about the Papacy or the 39 Articles, but they took the line that these ancient Endowments were given to the Church, because the Church was the nation; but that the moment Nonconformity began to exist they no longer belonged to the Church alone. But were there no Nonconformists before 1703? Were the 39 Articles settled in 1703? Was the breach with the Papacy in 1703? Therefore, by the showing of his hon. Friend (Mr. Russell), who was a Churchman, of the hon. Member for Leeds, who was a Nonconformist, and of the hon. Member for Eccles, who was also a Churchman, they, and the Government, were, in this Bill, proposing to rob the Church of Endowments which they admitted were given to the Church, as she now was, for a period of over 150 years. There was one point in the speech of his hon. Friend on which he commiserated him. He chose the most unfortunate example he possibly could have chosen to show why these Endowments should be taken away, namely, the case of Lady Hewley's chapels. These chapels were given to a certain sect of Nonconformists on condition that very specific doctrines should be taught. These Nonconformists, in the course of time, gradually changed their religious opinions, till at last the doctrines taught in the chapels were not the ones authorised in the trust deed. Those adherents of the chapels who retained their predilections for the old doctrines took the case into the Courts. The hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul), the other night, said what a scandal it was that these questions should come before the secular courts, and, he asked, was it not due to the Establishment that sacred questions came before a secular court? The hon. Member really was ignorant that all Dissenters in the final resort had to come to the secular courts too, and, if it was so, how was the scandal due to the Establishment? In Lady Hewley's case the court decided that the Nonconformists who worshipped in these chapels must part with the chapels, because, in the course of religious development, they had changed their doctrines. What did Parliament do, and this was the answer to his hon. Friend? His hon. Friend said the Church had changed her doctrines to a certain extent since the years these Endowments were given, and that, therefore, she ought to part with them. What did Parliament do in the case of Lady Hewlett's chapels? The courts had stated that by law these chapels must be taken away from those who owned them, but, in this case, Parliament said the law was not equity, and to prevent the perpetration of such robbery in the name of the law, Parliament passed an Act restoring those chapels to those who already enjoyed the use of them. What, therefore, became of the argument of his hon. Friend, based on the case of Lady Hewley's chapels? The Secretary for Scotland, alluding to the proselytising of the Church in Wales, asked:—

> "At whose cost is this proselytising done? It is at the cost of the landowners and farmers who pay the tithe."

Does the tithe, then, belong to the landowners and the farmers? If so, what right had the Government to give it to the County Council? If it did not belong to the landowners and the farmers, how was the Church, according to the Secretary for Scotland, proselytising at their cost? Never, in all his experience, had he heard such a flagrant example of the *suggestio falsi.* The hon. Member for Leeds, whose speech showed that he had as little conception of the minds of millions of his fellow-countrymen on this question, as he had of the religious convictions of the followers of Confucius or Mahomet, asked, why do we object to piecemeal Disestablishment? He should have thought it perfectly impossible for any hon. Member, whose object was not to wound the feelings of his fellow-countrymen, to ask such a question. Let it be understood, once and for all, that the friends of the Church regarded the Church of England as one and indivisible, and if they really knew and believed that Disestablishment had to come in Wales, or any other diocese, they would take Disestablishment and Disendowment over the whole Church rather than take it piecemeal. It was because they disbelieved Disestablishment was going to be a cardinal fact, and because they believed the Church had centuries of work before her, Established and Endowed, that they resisted this Bill, and would resist it. The Home Secretary took, as the basis for the policy of the Government, that Parliament had always more or less dealt with the revenues of the Church. He admitted that; but, in arguing why Wales should specially be chosen as the first field of operations, the right hon. Gentleman actually went back to the days of Giraldus Cambrensis. But whom was it Giraldus Cambrensis specially competed against? With whom was his feud? Hubert, Archbishop of Canterbury. Was Hubert an Englishman? Mind, the accusation of the Home Secretary was that then, as now, the Church of England was a foster-mother of the Church in Wales, and had no sympathy or spiritual connection with her, and he selected a period when Hubert the Norman was Archbishop of Canterbury, when the heel of the Norman was on England and Wales, Saxon and Celtic alike. The Member for Mid Glamorgan actually said in this House that the Church in Wales had never been one with the Church of England, but was always a separate national Church. Why, the Church in Wales and the Church in England were one in the days of the Roman occupation. England became heathen again, and the Church lingered on in the recesses of Wales, and what was more natural than that the Church, which had once been one all over England, should again re-unite when the troublous days had passed away, and England had been re-converted, not only by missionaries from Rome, but by missionaries also from the British Church, because most of the conversion in the north took place from Strathclyde and the Irish missionaries? Therefore, there never was a more complete historical delusion than to say that the Church in Wales was ever completely and organically distinct from the Church of England. He did not wish to use hard words of a political opponent, but was it honest to put the argument from the supposed success of the Irish Church after Disestablishment and Disendowment before the House when the framers of this Bill had taken care not to repeat those portions of the Irish Act which alone, or, at any rate, very largely enabled the Irish Church to meet Disestablishment and Disendowment in the way she did. If they merely took the fact that the Church of Ireland was given a capital sum of £8,000,000 to start upon—no doubt charged with annuities—and that the Church in Wales would be started with no capital at all, it seemed scarcely honest to ask them to believe confidently in the financial future of the Church in Wales, because of the financial success of the Disestablished Church in Ireland. It was a favourite argument with the Government to point to the enormous success of the voluntary system as illustrated in the case of the Free Church of Scotland. No one who had studied the history of the Free Church could deny that, as an example of voluntary effort, it was perhaps unsurpassed in the modern history of Churches. But what did he find? The President of the Board of Trade said that, in 50 years, the Free Church had spent £3,500,000 on buildings alone, but the Church in Wales had, in the same period, spent £3,000,000 on building Churches alone. Had the Free Church of Scotland, the magnificent example of Voluntary effort, fulfilled the idea of its founders? Would Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Candlish be satisfied if they knew that the equal dividend had only reached £160. The average income of the Church in Wales, on the other hand, was £220? There were no fewer than 356 rural parishes in Scotland, with an average population of 1,084, in which the Free Church had been unable to establish a Church. The Church in Wales covered every parish. It came to this—that what the Government really were proposing, if they compared the two Churches, was that now, after 50 years, the Free Church should be Disendowed, and should be told to start again, and a great blessing would rest upon it because of the voluntary gifts of its members. He had only one point more, and he had done. It was a point which the supporters of the Bill had studiously avoided. The doctrine of his Nonconformist friends was that the question of spiritualities was not within the functions of the State. But this Bill interfered in the most intimate manner with the spiritualities of the Church—in a manner in which the Bill which Disestablished the Church in Ireland never interfered with them, and in which a Bill to Disestablish the whole Church of England would not interfere with them. How could such interference be justified? There was no provision in the Bill for any fresh appointments between the passing of the Bill and the constitution of the representative body. Bishops might die, incumbents might die, but no bishops were to be appointed to take charge of the Sees, and populations were to remain without any spiritual care. The Irish Act did provide for these contingencies. Why had they been deliberately omitted here? Again, on the question of ritual, under this Bill the Court of Final Appeal in all matters concerning the Church in Wales would be the House of Lords. Thus, there would be the House of Lords giving one set of decisions with regard to the Church in Wales, and the Privy Council giving another set of decisions with regard to the Church in England; and so the foundation was being laid for two divergent sets of judgments on the ritual and doctrines of the Church of England. Then, by Clause 13, Wales was taken out of Convocation. Convocation was the governing body of the Church of England. Where were Welshmen to go?

AN HON. MEMBER: Let them form one for themselves.

*VISCOUNT WOLMER: Let them form one for themselves! That showed his hon. Friend's complete inability to understand the constitution of the Church. The hon. Member deliberately proposed that Churchmen in Wales should set up a separate Convocation. He might tell the House that Churchmen in Wales regarded the Church in England and in Wales as one and indivisible. Therefore this clause was a deliberate disruption of the spiritual and ecclesiastical governing body of the Church of England. Again, under Clause 14 Her Majesty was to grant a charter of incorporation to the representative body when she was satisfied that it had been formed in accordance with the wishes of the bishops, clergy, and laity of the Church in Wales. The laity of the Church of Ireland were ascertained, because a census was taken; but who were the laity in Wales? Who was to advise Her Majesty on that point? His right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, who was of opinion that it was not the function of the State to interfere in Church matters, was going to decide who the laity in the Church in Wales were, and whether the representative body had been formed in accordance with the wishes of the laity. If the Government would not have a census before Disestablishment, at any rate they might have one afterwards. The Church in Wales was to be at the mercy of the Home Secretary of the day, and that seemed to him a usurpation of functions to which neither the Church in Wales nor the Church in England would ever submit. The opponents of the Bill had been taunted by the President of the Board of Trade and by the Home Secretary because, while professing to believe implicitly in the spiritual mission of the Church, they regarded the passing of a Bill like this as the inevitable destruction of the Church. No Churchman he was acquainted with ever had believed for a moment that it meant the destruction of the Church. No Parliament and no Minister had the power to destroy the Church. That had never been their contention, and those who said it was so, said so in order that they might give the go-by to the true objections and the true contentions. The opponents of the Bill did contend that her spiritual work and her work for good would be greatly, grievously, and for a long time hindered. They did say that it would take years to reconstitute the fabric of her endowments and her parochial organisation. They did say that in the interval much ground would be lost, and that they resented the proposals of the Bill because they were made on pretences historically false, and contained the germs of intolerable wrong. The Church had given the greatest example to the whole world of what voluntaryism could do. Long before Nonconformity existed the Church was giving. His right hon. Friend did not deny that. The Church was an example by which Nonconformity had profited. At the present moment, man for man and head for head, Churchmen were giving in voluntary gifts as much as Nonconformists; Churchmen fully admitted that no Church was a living Church that depended only on the endowments of a past age; but they contended that no Church could do its work properly without Endowments, and one proof of that contention was that the Nonconformists were collecting Endowments. The Free Church in Scotland had been in existence 50 years, and had now Endowments amounting to a million and a half. The contention of Churchmen was that when they had voluntarily collected their Endowments they were going to be taken away from them. In conclusion he would quote only one passage to prove his contention that to strengthen all churches endowments were absolutely necessary. The quotation was taken from *Life and Work* of January 1895, the Church of Scotland parish magazine. It referred to the very remarkable work, *The New Era*, by the Rev. Josiah Strong, himself a Congregationalist, and for eight years the general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance of the United States. In the course of the article it is stated—

> "In many villages there were twice as many churches as were needed, all feeble, and struggling with each other for life; while along the Erie Canal for eight miles were found scattered hamlets, containing together a considerable population, where there was no religious service of any kind from one year's end to another."

Information from other part of the States indicates that these five counties are fairly representative of the rural districts of New York. A clergyman in another county writes—

> "We have investigated the condition of the county, and find it little less than appalling. Not one half of its children have Sabbath School privileges, and wide stretches of country are without any religious activities of any kind."

This state of things is not exceptional.

> "There are at least 70 towns in Maine,"

also an early-settled State—

> "in which no religious service is held. At the same time there are scores of towns in which two or more little churches are struggling for existence, calling for missionary help, and expending most of their energies in raising money to pay current expenses. It is not pretended,"

says Dr. Strong, after some further similar quotations,

> "that these describe the condition of all country communities; but it is only a question of time when precisely such conditions will result from well-established tendencies, which exist wherever the population is being depleted."

One last quotation—

> "In the country, the depleted churches in their struggle for existence almost necessarily fall into competition with each other, and the smaller the village the sharper becomes the sectarian rivalry. Instead of making the Church a means to save men, men are sought, if at all, as a means to save the Church. Thus the churches lose their hold on the population; and as they grow weaker the minister's support dwindles, until he is forced to divide his time with some other feeble church in a neighbouring village, or turn aside to farming, in order to eke out his scanty living, or leave altogether. In this way the churches are enfeebled until many of them become extinct. During the past 30 years thousands of churches have thus died from exhaustion in the rural districts of the United States."

Neither in Wales nor elsewhere could a Church cover the whole religious field and do her work completely without Endowments. Therefore, until all constitutional means of resistance should have been exhausted, they would oppose firmly this proposal to take from the Church in Wales Endowments which they believed she ought to retain in he spiritual interests of the people of that country.

*MR. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) observed that before the Tithe Committee which sat a few years ago an Irish land agent, Mr. Hussey, was asked whether Disestablishment had or had not been a blessing to the Church in Ireland? After some hesitation the witness replied: "Well, it has been." Disestablishment in Ireland had had the effect of driving the drones away from the Church, and, as a consequence, she had become stronger morally, spiritually, and socially. The opponents of this Bill contended that if her Endowments were taken from the Welsh Church she would be weakened. If there was any validity in that argument the Church ought to have been most successful when she was most richly endowed. The reverse, however, had been the case in Wales. If there was any town in the Principality where the Church was successful it was Cardiff, where there were 23 places for Church of England worship and 30 clergymen, and where the Endowments were only, from all sources, £1,200 per annum. But in in only one of these places of worship was the service conducted in Welsh.

The Nonconformists, on the other hand, had 13 chapels in which the service was conducted in that language. The strongest case of Disendowment he had ever heard of was the Pope's loss of his temporal dominions, yet no one could say that the Pope lost any spiritual power in consequence. Since then he had even contended successfully against the strongest man in Europe — namely, Prince Bismarck. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol had prophesied that, after Disestablishment, Church of England landlords would treat their Nonconformist tenantry worse than hitherto. But he hoped that one result of the Welsh Land Commission would be the enactment of legislation for preventing landlords from persecuting their tenants. He looked upon the present measure as an honest attempt to settle the greatest grievance they had as a people.

*MR. J. H. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton) said, he would not have trespassed upon the time of the House if it were not for the fact that he felt a firm conviction that this Bill was not only a direct menace to, and attack on, the Church of England as a whole, but was also fraught with the greatest peril to many of the highest influences that made for the good of their country. He was unfortunately unable to be in the House during the Debate on the First Reading of the Bill, nor had he the pleasure of listening to the masterly speech of the Home Secretary at the commencement of the present Debate, but in reading and listening to the speeches of the promoters of the measure, he had been struck with the tone of cyncism which characterised them in contrast to the earnestness and depth of feeling and well reasoned out speeches of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Mr. Plunket. Lord Rosebery in his speech at Cardiff said, he did not ask his supporters for any enthusiasm. He doubted if any good work was ever entered upon that did not arouse some enthusiasm, but certainly the Prime Minister had got his wish. This measure had raised no enthusiasm, except amongst the Welsh Members, and those who were anxious, not only to cut off the Church in Wales, but also to cut off Wales from England. That was surely the hardly-muffled key-note of the Home Secretary's speech. He would like to say a few words upon what might be called the religious aspect of the question. He doubted if this aspect would create much interest or carry much weight amongst some hon. Members opposite, who would cripple the Church in Wales at all hazards, but surely it went to the very root of the whole matter. They had been told on the authority of Ministers that Disestablishment would strengthen the Church in Wales. The hon. Member for Flintshire had stated, in a speech at Rhyl, that Disestablishment was more religious than a political question, and he quite agreed with that admission. He went on to say—

> "I believe I am expressing the feeling of all the Nonconformists of Great Britain, and a great many Churchmen as well, when I say that I strongly believe that State Establishments have always been injurious to spiritual religion. All who have studied Church history know that by far the most active and spiritual time of Christianity was during the first three centuries, when it was a persecuted religion."

He could not recognise a comparison between the Early Church and the English Church in Wales as it now existed. But they read that in the early days the Christians had all things in common, and, if the hon. Member for Flintshire wished to be logical and to carry out this doctrine, and was ready to take away the £150,000 to £160,000 incomes and Endowments of the Church in Wales, surely he would be willing to take away also the incomes and Endowments of the Nonconformist chapels in Wales, and put them into a common purse to be devoted to similar purposes. But while, in the words of one hon. Member opposite, they would like to free the Church from the mere dross of earthly and temporal privileges, they showed no anxiety to take away the dross from the chapels. He was sure the hon. Member for Flintshire and those who sat with him were men of high religious convictions, but he would ask them if they honestly believed they would make religion more spiritual in Wales by beggaring the teachers of religion? He could not admit that the case of the Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland was at all parallel with that of the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales, but it was admitted that Disestablishment had greatly crippled the resources of the Irish Church and its religious influences, and he asked how religious-thinking men could regard with equanimity the spoiling of the Church in Wales? It was simply a perversion of terms to speak of the English Church in Wales as an alien Church, notwithstanding the Home Secretary's ingenuous argument that "even an indigenous thing, if it was adulterated, became in the truest sense alien," when they remembered that, out of a total of 970 parishes in that country, 422 had the prefix "llan," which in Wales meant "Church;" and that it could not be denied that the ancestors of all the Nonconformists in Wales belonged at one time to the Parent Church. It was not the Church in Wales that had become adulterated. On the contrary, it was her growing strength, her growing independence, her growing freedom from debt, and the beauty of her services that had created this feeling of jealousy and envy which was at the root of this cruel, mean, and sordid campaign against her. He asked hon. Members if they were regardless of the sacrilege and spoilation that was part and parcel of this Bill? Could they regard with equanimity the consequences of it to the country in the relaxation of religious influence, and in the probable withdrawal of religious education to thousands of children in Wales who were at present educated in the Church Schools? Were hon. Members like Gallio of old, and cared for none of these things? Was all the Church's good work to be sacrificed to gratify spite and cupidity, or to give hon. Members opposite a longer lease of Office? Were they going to fulfil our last Poet Laureate's words, and—

"Bring the old dark ages back, without the faith, without the hope;
Break the State, the Church, the Throne, and roll their ruins down the slope?"

They were told that the Welsh people were passionately longing for Disestablishment. Would that be so when they found that they would get nothing thereby; when they found that they still had to pay the tithes which they were told they would no longer have to pay, and when they found that, in many places, the taxation would be greatly increased if the crippled Church had to relinquish her schools? The truth was, that Disestablishment had never been the sole issue clearly put before the people of Wales. It had always been mixed up with Home Rule and other questions. He believed the Church in Wales would never be in so much danger as she was now, and no wonder the Welsh Members wanted to make hay while the sun shone. He believed, and he prayed he was right in believing, that the Church of England was ingrained in the hearts of all classes, and he believed also the Church was dear to and reverenced by hundreds of Dissenters in Wales as being the stay of their poor, the relief of their sick, the burial-place of their dead; and he warned the Government to take care lest the Welsh Bill, which they hoped would fill up the cup of the House of Lords, did not recoil on their own heads, and engulf their Party whenever they appealed to the country.

SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) said, that he had always been in favour of absolute religious equality, but in the last two Parliaments he had refrained from voting on Church questions. In 1884, when he was first a candidate, the general question of the separation of Church and State was in the forefront of the Liberal Programme, but he freely accepted the terms which were then offered in his constituency, that he should remain neutral. At the last General Election, however, he was asked to reconsider his position as to the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales and in Scotland. He, therefore, in 1892, sent round a circular to each of his electors, asking the opinion of each in regard to the question of Disestablishment in those two parts of the kingdom. The replies which he received were in the proportion of nearly two to one in favour of Disestablishment. He, therefore, felt it to be his bounden duty to give effect to the wishes of his constituents and to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill.

*MR. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said, that he would not have thought of taking part in this Debate had the discussion been confined to the subject of the proposed Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church in Wales. But it had been more or less openly avowed by several of the supporters of the Bill that the attack was not on the Church in Wales alone, but virtually on the Church of England as a whole, and more than that—and this was his excuse for venturing to intrude in the Debate—arguments had been used on behalf of the Bill which would strike at the existence of an Established Church anywhere—which struck at the union of Church and State. The hon. member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) supported this Bill on the broad principles of religious equality, the principle that the State ought to be absolutely impartial and neutral between all religious bodies in the land. Other hon. Members had spoken to a similar effect, and he was not aware that any advocate of the Bill had been careful to disclaim sympathy with that widest view of the position. He would except the hon. Member for the Eccles Division (Mr. H. J. Roby) who stated that, although he supported this Bill, he would not extend Disestablishment to the Church of England as a whole. As to this principle of religious neutrality, in his humble opinion, it would involve a reversal of the Constitution of our country. We were the citizens of a Christian and Protestant State. We lived under a Christian and Protestant Constitution. This was our guarantee for our liberties, civil and religious—a guarantee for the liberties of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects not less than for the liberties of Protestants. Under that Constitution there was the formal acknowledgment of religion, and of a particular religion, by the State. Our Legislation and the public life of the country were carried on under a recognition of Christianity and the Protestant Faith as the religion of the Nation as a whole. This could not be the case if the guiding principle of the State was to be absolute religious neutrality. But it did not follow that there was not absolute religious freedom. The hon. Member for Mid Glamorganshire (Mr. S. T. Evans) said, on Friday afternoon, that—

> "The best acknowledgment or recognition of religion by the State was to permit every man to worship as he pleased."

But every man was so permitted now. The persecuting principle was a thing of the past, as regarded this Protestant State. Persecution was recognised to be inconsistent with the principles of Protestantism. If there were real grievances in Wales or in any other part of the Kingdom, because of an Established Church, let them know what they were, and let them seek to find remedies for them; but let them not sever the tie between Church and State, the union of which was so important to the State—much more important to the State than to the Church. The hon. Member for South Edinburgh said—

> "An Established Church was kept up for the members of a particular denomination."

This was not so. It was kept up for the good of the whole people. He knew that the United States of America and several of our Colonies might be pointed to as illustrations of how well Christian and Protestant principles could hold their own, notwithstanding the absence of an Established Church. But he would remind the House that these countries were greatly influenced by the traditions, the laws, and the example of the Mother Country; and, although they had no formal connection of Church and State themselves, they were naturally affected by the order of things prevailing here. Sever the union of Church and State in this country, however, and could it be doubted that the result would be disastrously felt in all English-speaking communities abroad? His hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had quoted the opinion of the late Dr. Döllinger, that the Disestablishment of the Church of England would be a blow to the cause of religion throughout Christendom. The evil effect which Dr. Dollinger dreaded for all Christendom would be especially felt in our Colonies. What was already the result in those of our Colonies where religious equality was made the one guiding principle? In Victoria no religious teaching was given in the public schools, and, if he was not misinformed, all definite religious references had been removed from the school books; and the results were deplored by all sections of the Christian Church. The name of Dr. Chalmers had been mentioned by the Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan), but would Dr. Chalmers have had any sympathy with the views on which this Bill was advocated? Dr. Chalmers said, in his address to the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1843—

> "We are the advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion, and we are not voluntaries."

Further, in an Earnest Appeal to the Free Church on the subject of its Economics, in 1846, he said—

> "We rejoice in the testimony of the Free Church for the principle of a National Establishment, and most sincerely do we hope that she will never fall away from it."

And, only a few weeks before his death, in the course of his evidence before the House of Commons Committee on the Refusal of Sites, 12th May 1847, he said—

> "We, of the Free Church, are not voluntaries, and I confess to you that I should look with a sigh to the demolition of the framework either of the Scottish or of the English Establishment."

These extracts show what was Dr. Chalmers' attitude towards the policy now urged by supporters of this Bill. He (Mr. Campbell) opposed this Bill because he saw in it an attack, not only on the Established Church of England, but on the principle of Church Establishment, and because, if carried to its logical issue, it would introduce a system which would do much to deprive our State—the public life of our people—of all religious character, and to land our country in a hopeless secularism.

Mr. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, that he desired for a special reason, as a Scotch Member, looking forward to the assistance of his Welsh friends in days to come, to make little more than a formal interposition in this Debate, and he would confine himself to one reason among several which induced him to support the Second Reading of this Bill, a reason which, as far as he had been able to gather from the Debate, had not been brought prominently before the consideration of the House. To his mind the strongest reason that had been urged against the Bill was what he would venture to call the utilitarian argument in this matter. It was said that it was a universal blessing to the country at large that there should be secured in every parish an independent and thoroughly competent religious and moral teacher, whose function it would be to bring home to the feelings and thoughts of the people the great questions, destiny, and duty of their own relations to the deep mysteries of life and death, along with the obligations and consolations that spring from the possession of truth

upon these momentous matters. It was contended that this great national advantage was secured by Establishment and Endowment, and that it was annihilated by Disestablishment and Disendowment. He admitted that there was great force in the contention, and if the argument had been true in the details he should not have been influenced by those considerations of social circumstances and relations as he really was, and might then have been disposed to persuade the people to an opposite course, even to tell them that in this particular matter he shrunk from being the instrument of their will. He granted, for the sake of argument, that Endowment did secure the independence of a religious and moral teacher in a way that voluntaryism did not and could not do, but what was the good of that independence if the teacher was not free? The independent teacher with a gag in his mouth would never make much progress, and this, he contended, was the necessary tendency of Establishment. Establishment took away what Endowment promised to secure, because it tended to convert the expected, fearless, and spontaneous moral counsellor into a mere mechanical mouthpiece of dictated and traditional propositions. As a fact of political history, there could be no doubt that 300 and more years ago, the House, participating in an Act of Church Establishment, declared that the 39 Articles were the true, the absolute, and immutable truth; their exclusive advocacy by the Church was directed, and the Executive Government were instructed at the same time to deal with gainsayers by the civil sword, as the phrase ran, and with clerical gainsayers by the additional penalty of deprivation. He was not going to criticise the Church Articles on their merits, though he should be perfectly in harmony with the ancient usage of Parliament if he did so. He would only say what everyone of them knew, that those formularies embodied a philosophy of the universe and of human nature as remarkable as it was venerable; that they presented a not less remarkable reading of the most striking chapter of human history upon the basis of the credibility of the supernatural; and that—if he might be allowed the expression—they cast the horoscope of the human race in other spheres—in short, they presented a series of topics on which he conceded, and more than that, on which he maintained, that it was of the utmost importance that competent men, both in power of mind and in instructed intelligence, should communicate heart to heart, and mind to mind, with their fellow-men. But what had the House done in the matter? By establishing those creeds under the penalty of deprivation and temporal ruin against the teachers who might differ from them, it made it, to a large extent, impossible that there should be this heart to heart and mind to mind communication between those religious and moral teachers and their fellow-men. Had the same course been adopted with the instructors in other branches of human thought, what would have been the state of things to-day? He ventured to say they would have had a hypocritical science, a canting philosophy, a false history, an insincere art, and a cynical literature—in short, they would have had a serious retardation of moral and intellectual advance all along the line. That House, by establishing the Church and its creeds, made the assumption that, while all other departments of human thought were subject to change and to progress, the very highest of all departments of human thought was to be regarded as incapable of change and progress, and the creed which was the appropriate expression of the religious thought of one generation could also be conveniently used as the equally appropriate expression of the religious thought of any and every other generation. But how had that assumption been justified by experience and by history? It had been utterly condemned as a disastrous mistake. It had silenced and sterilised the clergy, who, if they believed that creed to be wrong, had everything to lose by teaching what they believed to be right. But with the laity the case was very different; they were not required to be orthodox in order to live. Unnumbered critics of unquestioned intelligence had assailed the philosophic system and the historical statement of the Church Articles. This very Bill contained clauses, no doubt practically copied from the Irish Act—but still clauses of which he would say that the skill with which they were drawn was only equal to the courage and long-sightedness that distinguished them—which provided that the future Church in Wales should be completely free, if it chose, to alter its very central doctrines without at the same time endangering or forfeiting an acre or a sixpence of its property. With respect to the attitude of the laity in this matter, did hon. Members think that the great mass of the working classes was profoundly in love with their creed or their Church doctrines and formularies? He ventured to ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, whose affection for the Church he did not for one moment doubt, whether they considered themselves the most fiery champions of the Thirty-nine Articles. If they liked he would put them to the test. The distinguished leader of the Opposition had recently put forth what was already a famous book upon the foundations of belief, a book in respect of which he could only speak in terms of the profoundest admiration for its power, its originality, its learning, its brilliancy, and its varied and multifarious resources. He was not going to criticise the contents of that book, it would be entirely out of order, but he thought he might be allowed to make a passing allusion to it in connection with his argument, as a relevant consideration and a striking sign of the times. He was perfectly well aware that the Established Church had, and could have, no more intrepid and skilful supporter in Parliament; but he should be really curious, having read his book, to hear how the right hon. Gentleman was going to maintain that that House was right when it declared the Thirty-nine Articles to be the absolute and the immutable truth. No doubt it was only fair to the right hon. Gentleman to have regard to the limits within which he restricted the scope and intention of his very remarkable essay; but when reading it he, for one, could not help feeling that if the author's intellectual attitude to the Church Articles had been that of the receptivity and faith which characterised the Nicene or Elizabethan periods, he would have gone a little out of his way to say something more on behalf of the one or two articles of the creed which he had taken notice of than simply to say that they might be provisionally accepted apparently on the ground that they furnished a comfortable and convenient refuge for certain alleged intellectual perplexities, and that he would have given less countenance than he had given to the comment that might be made, and had been made, that his main achievement had been to prove nothing but that science was as baseless as theology. He adduced these examples as an indication of the contrast between the attitude of the modern laity and clergy upon the subject of the Church Articles that Parliament had enacted as the truth. If he was right in believing that there had been a very large falling away from the ancient form of allegiance to the Church Articles on the part of the British modern public, he was entitled to infer that it was only an act of common honesty that they should take the earliest moment to disestablish, and by an easy corollary disendow, the Church. How was it that the clergy in these matters should be in a state of universal silent acquiescence, broken only by the occasional and fitful explosion of some non-natural interpretationist, while all around them there was more or less solemn discontent or high and heated controversy? He did not wish to impute degrading motives to a large body of men who set an invaluable example to the public on many most important points, but, in his opinion, they unavoidably fell short in respect to what ought to be their crowning virtue, a fearless and veracious outspokenness on matters pertaining to the very highest human interests. It seemed to him that the effect of the establishment by Parliament of certain forms of belief had been to repel from the service of the Church at the very beginning the boldest class of intellects by the prospect of creed slavery that had been deliberately placed before them, and to influence those who were naturally of a more acquiescent temperament in their youth, when their minds probably could not have been sufficiently made up, to enter a profession which they liked, and which had, of course, its honourable prizes. When they had got the latter class of men in, they had done everything in their power to stifle inquiry on their part, and if riper reflection brought different thoughts it might involve their professional and domestic ruin. He thought he was entitled to say that their tortuous system of Church Establishment had, during the course of generations, produced a sort of etiquette or habit, like the wearing of a garb, whereby the normal cleric instinctively recoiled from anything like thoroughgoing inquiry, not so much, perhaps, because he thought it would be dangerous, but because he had got accustomed to look upon it as unprofessional, and, perhaps, unnecessary. If that be so, or approximately so, he wished to ask what became of their boasted parochial centre of high moral vitality? Where were the materials for it? How could the intellect of a bondsman impart a free inspiration; how could stagnation ever create life? The people were asking for the bread of living truth, and they had constructed a machine for the purpose of supplying them with a stone of dead tradition and antiquated form. Not only were they doing no good, in the highest sense of good he meant—and he did not deny the usefulness of the parochial clergy in many minor ways—not only were they not doing good in the highest sense, and a kind of good for which the clergy ought to be called into existence and perpetuated, but they were doing positive mischief. They were paying ten to fifteen thousand men to handicap all other competing forms of religious and moral propaganda, and opposing the growth of possible enlightenment and progress. They were lowering the tone —and this to him was a serious statement to make—of spiritual veracity all over society. They were turning what was to be an elevating institution into a degrading one, and when they had turned the light that was in the nation into darkness, how great was that darkness. Of course he would be told that the proper cure for all this mischief was not the Disestablishment of the Church, but the emancipation of the clergy. He welcomed that idea as an idea, but as a practical man it seemed to him to be entirely Utopian and impracticable. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol, suggested the idea of concurrent Endowments, but concurrent Endowment did not mean an emancipated clergy but a subsidised congregation. Besides, they could not endow every little sect, and if they did not there was an end to concurrent Endowment. Another alternative suggested by many Church reformers was that there should be what they called a comprehensive Church, in which every Church of every opinion, from Agnosticism to Fetishism should have a place. Why, common sense would not stand it. People would say: "This is not a Church at all," and none would be more zealous in saying so than Churchmen themselves, and they would be quite right. It would not be a Church at all, but a colony of philosophisers, and they could get enough of them at any time for nothing. So, on the whole, he was not able to see his way out of the difficulty otherwise than by supporting the Second Reading of this Bill. The evil that was in any Established Church—which must necessarily be connected with the establishment of opinions which could not exist without it—was, to his mind, immense, and it was incurable in the Church. Accordingly, all he could do was to wash his hands entirely of all responsibility for the perpetuation of the evil, and to trust that the social organisation would, as it had heretofore done, evolve those self-preserving functions and ordinances which would conduct it with sufficient speed along the path of ethical progress; that nature would, as it always had done, from time to time, raise up men of genuine inspiration and heroic character, whose free and fearless teaching, both by pen and tongue, would be diffused throughout the community by the Press and other communicative agencies. These, in his opinion, would do far more for the moral elevation of the race than all the exertions of rival sects or a creed-bound clergy.

*SIR H. S. KING (Hull, Central) said, that the speech of the hon. Member for East Edinburgh had aroused the feelings of many Members. He did not think that the hon. Member could have realised how he was wounding those who differed from him on this question. What a contrast between his speech and the speeches of the right hon. Member for the University of Dublin and of the hon. Member for North Beds. Listening to the able and witty speech of the hon. Member for North Beds, the thought occurred to him, as it probably would to the hon. Member's nearest relatives, "our foes are those of our own household." It had been argued in that Debate that they were bound to submit to the wishes of the majority in Wales. He could not admit that any majority had a right to alter the moral law, or any of the conditions of the Decalogue, or to repeal the Eighth Commandment. In moral matters he would never bow to any majority simply because it was a majority, for he could not forget that it was a majority that cried 1,800 years ago, "Not this man, but Barabbas." They had arguments, avowed and unavowed, in support of this Bill, and the arguments adopted by the Front Bench were not those that chiefly influenced the Members from Wales. What nonsense it was to go back to Giraldus Cambrensis and the Welsh Princes for guidance as to the course which should be pursued at the end of the Nineteenth Century. They knew the Celt, and loved him for his romantic tendencies, but he would as soon accept the descriptions given in Parnellite organs of the Secretary for Scotland and the Secretary for Ireland as be influenced in his conduct in respect of this Bill by references to the Princes of Wales. The Secretary for Scotland had told them that tithe was given by the community for the use of the community. He believed that when the right hon. Gentleman said that, he was guilty of an historical inaccuracy worthy, perhaps, of a still more distinguished member of his family. His own view was that tithe was originally the gift of the lords of the soil who donated it to a Church or Abbey, and that the custom thus initiated gradually crystallised into law. But the tithes owned by the Church to-day were not the only tithes owned in this country, for there were tithes owned by lay impropriators. How did the Government distinguish between them? What was the distinction in law between the ownership of the one set of tithes and the ownership of the other? If it would be confiscation to take away the tithe belonging to the lay impropriator, how was it not robbery to take away tithes from the Church? The Government pretended that because the custom of paying tithes was converted by the law into a legal usage it became a tax, and was national property, but the payment of tithes to the lay impropriator was equally the creation of law, and equally enforced by the law, and he could see no legal distinction between the one kind of tithe and the other. The right hon. Member for the Bridgeton

Division, with that frank ingenuousness which endeared him to his opponents, had let out the true reason for plundering the Church. According to the right hon. Gentleman, it was not because the property of the Church was national property that it was to be taken, but because it handicapped the Dissenting minister in his competition with the Church. The Church taught—and he believed that it was still a doctrine of the Christian religion—that we should do to others as we would be done by. He commended that principle to the attention of the Nonconformist gentlemen who were now preparing to plunder the Church. But in believing that if they could fleece the Church they would be less hampered in the contest Nonconformists were mistaken, for he was of opinion that the Church would rise to the occasion, that it would not die, but would rise like a phœnix from its ashes. The Home Secretary, apparently, believed that the passage of this Bill would bring about the millennium. Probably that was about the date the Bill would pass at. The right hon. Gentleman was bringing not peace, but a sword into Wales. At present Churchmen subscribed to Nonconformist objects, and lived in amity with their Nonconformist brethren. But the right hon. Gentleman could hardly believe that the members of a plundered Church would be very ready to hold out the right hand of fellowship to those who have attacked and humiliated the Church which they cherished. They had heard a good deal about the admirable self-denial of the poor members of Welsh chapels, and it was usually said that the rich in Wales were all on the side of the Church. If that was the case, it was a bad look-out for the Nonconformists, because Church property, it was said, did not prosper in the hands of the spoilers; and when the booty was spent and dissipated, as it soon would be, the Nonconformist's last state would be worse than his first. He would probably before long have to pay an additional school tax, to supply the educational wants at present provided for in Voluntary schools. The pious sons of the Church in the day when she was robbed of her revenues in order to build museums and create schools of art would nobly come to her rescue and support, but not one shilling would be given to any community outside the Church. He denied the moral competence of Parliament to deal with this matter on the present restricted franchise. It might fairly be asked whether this important question, in which women were so gravely interested, ought to be decided simply by the votes of men? It could not be denied that this was a matter in which millions of women were deeply and vitally interested, and they had no representation in that House by their votes. Women had a pre-eminent right to a voice in the question. Their religious feelings were more intense than those of the average elector, and in proportion to their means they contributed more than men to Church purposes. Was it not inequitable that this House, representing only males, should venture to decide a question of this magnitude and solemnity without paying the slightest regard either to the feelings or rights of the most important part of the population? The women of this country had had no opportunity of declaring what they thought of this proposal. The House had no doubt the power to pass this Bill; but it was always restrained by considerations of equity. It was excellent to have a giant's strength, but it was not always well to use it like a giant. He should offer the most strenuous opposition to the Bill as an iniquity, and an uncandid iniquity, perpetrated by a small majority of the half of the community which possessed electoral power upon the other half which had no votes. They were asked to plunder unrepresented women, to take money which these women regarded as sacred, and to apply it to secular uses. If they polled the women of England, Scotland, and Wales on this question he was certain it would be found that the great majority felt the utmost repugnance and abhorrence of this confiscation, and that they conceived it to be nothing short of sacrilege. He would not enter on other grounds of opposition to the Bill. He contented himself with stating one point on which he thought a strong plea could be founded for at least a pause in these destructive and confiscatory proceedings. The Bill ought not to pass until it had been submitted to the country in such a way that a clear, unsophisticated verdict of the people could be taken upon it. No such verdict had as yet been rendered even by the male electors, and the women had not been consulted at all. He thought that in matters of religion involving the morals, the conscience, the piety of these kingdoms they in Parliament ought to be very careful to see that they did not legislate in such a way as to affect the rights and flout the consciences of that immense and powerful social force. If any good was to come out of it they must carry the women with them in that action. He could not see what good even hon. Gentlemen opposite could hope for from an arbitrary injustice perpetrated with an utter disregard of feminine sentiments and opinions throughout the United Kingdom.

MR. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) said, he was most anxious to avoid intemperate language, though occasionally speeches on the other side had not been free from it. He believed he could fairly claim that during this long controversy he had never used a harsh or bitter word. He had many personal friends among the clergy and the laity of the Established Church, and he had always endeavoured to respect their feelings in this matter. But he was bound to claim for his colleagues that the hard words had not all been on one side, and he had in his hand passages from the sermons and speeches of clergymen and members of the Church of the most irritating kind. He hoped, however, that in the House the argument would be conducted in a spirit of fairness and kindness. The right hon. Member for Bristol quoted with great emphasis the opinion of an eminent German divine, Dr. Döllinger, that Disestablishment "would be a blow to Christianity not only in England but throughout Europe." He thought it was very unwise that they should go to Germany for opinions on great questions of principle. He prepared to take his opinions from Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking in 1885 upon the question of principle, said :—

> "I am an English Nonconformist, born and bred in dissent, and I am opposed, from honest conviction, to anything in the nature of State interference with, or State aid to, religion. . . For political, as well as for social reasons, as well, also, as in the interests of religion itself, I am a Liberationist. I would free the Church from State control whether in England, or Scotland, or in Wales ; and my opinion of the subject is, no doubt, strengthened by my belief that the appropriation to the service of a single sect of funds which were originally designed for the benefit of the whole nation is an injustice ; and I hope to live to see the time when voluntary zeal will provide for religious work, and will set free those vast Endowments, which originally included among their purposes the improvement of the condition of the poor, and the education of the people, as well as the special objects to which they have since been exclusively devoted."

In another passage the right hon. Gentleman said :—

> "I know that in England, at all events, history shows that the vast mass of our clergy have always resisted every attempt to extend the limits of freedom, every social and every political reform ; while, on the other hand, the ministers of the Dissenting sects have been their warmest and heartiest friends. You cannot find the cause of this in the men ; human nature is the same whether it be in an Establishment or outside it ; you must find it in the system ; it has a narrowing effect, and tends to alienate all its supporters from the national movement. You must look to the same cause for the instances of sectarian bigotry, which, unfortunately, are too common."

These were his views about the Established form of religion, and he was glad to see that the Under Secretary had the courage of his convictions when he said that you cannot escape from the logical consequences of holding that the Established form of religion was a mistake. If it was good for Ireland, it was also good for Wales, and it was good for England if the English people had only the sense to see it. He had listened with sympathy to the exquisite speech of the right hon. Member for Dublin University ; for the Welsh Members this controversy was full of pain, and it was only under a deep sense of duty that they were trying to carry out what they considered to be the just claims of their country. That speech, as well as the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Edinburgh, had dealt with the relation of the Irish Church to the coming Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. It was said that the Church in Ireland was very much more liberally treated than it was proposed to treat the Church in Wales. No doubt the financial aspect was a very complex one. They had the fact stated in 1893 that the representative body, which held the property of the Church and administered it, had in its possession between seven and eight millions of money. It was said that private munificence had contributed no less than four millions of money, but that was not an endowment of the Church. The sum of £3, 500,000 now stood as a capitalised sum; which more or less represented Endowments. So, therefore, he urged it would be perfectly unreasonable to say that the Irish Church had got anything like eight millions. He was perfectly sure that the Endowments of the Irish Church certainly never represented £1,500,000. [An hon. MEMBER: "Over £7,000,000."] No doubt they made a good deal over these ingenious and exceedingly meritorous financial transactions. The Irish Church supplied a good example of what was going to happen to the Welsh Church, and he felt happy that it was so. How had Establishment worked in Ireland? How had the Church suffered there? He happened to represent a Division, in which there was an able and enterprising Tory paper, *The Western Mail*, the determined opponent of their crusade. It had done everything it could to oppose their movement. It was conducted with great ability and energy; but in 1892, just after the General Election, *The Western Mail* sent over a special correspondent to Ireland to look about and see what the results of Disestablishment were after many years. This correspondent had resided three years in Ireland before Disestablishment, from 1867 to 1869, and he bore the highest testimony to the great advance made by the Church after Disestablishment. Amongst others of the clergy he saw the Archbishop of Dublin and down to the incumbents in poor country parishes. The correspondent wrote as follows :—

"No matter what place I stayed at on my journey wherein there was a church I found some evidence—as well in the church buildings as in the members of the Church—of renewed life. Whether in a large town like Belfast, with its twenty churches, or in a remote country parish, I could not help remarking the increased activity of the Church as compared with what it was only five-and-twenty years ago. In many places where I remember the churches to have been in a ruinous or half-ruinous state in pre-Disestablishment days, I now found them either in a state of good repair or in course of restoration. At Bangor, in County Down, I found a new parish church erected, at a cost of £12,000. But why multiply instances of this kind in face of the fact that over four millions sterling have been subscribed to the Church of Ireland Sustentation Fund since the Act of Disestablishment was passed?"

The correspondent wrote further :—

"During my stay at Armagh I availed myself of the opportunity of ascertaining the views of the Venerable Dr. Meade, Archdeacon of Armagh. 'I do believe,' said the venerable Archdeacon, 'that in the history of our Church there never was a time when her members took a more loving and intelligent interest in her doctrines and in her well-being. Disestablishment,' said the venerable Archdeacon, in conclusion, 'has brought with it these advantages. It has drawn us all close together. We now live in a Church which is quick with the Divine life. The very fact of having to work and make sacrifices for the Church has made her members love her more. The giving of their time and abilities to her support has made them more earnest and zealous in her service.' At the Armagh Conference on the question of lay help, the Dean of Armagh said :— 'Our select vestries—' created by the constitution since the Church was disestablished—'have brought authorised lay help into every parish, and I am certain that the average clergyman would deplore the loss of his select vestry as a calamity; that the interest in all good work which our vestries have evoked and utilised is quite incalculable.' The Rev. Canon Crozier, D.D., treasurer of Down Cathedral, chaplain to the Archbishop of Armagh, and Incumbent of Holywood, County Down, said: 'In the ten years that followed 1860, that is to say, the ten years immediately preceding the coming into effect of the Act of Disestablishment, the total subscriptions from Ireland to the Church Missionary Society were £63,786 6s. In the last ten years, with the full burden of self-support upon Irish Churchmen, the subscriptions to the same society reached the splendid total of £79,568 2s. 9d., an increase of £15781 16s. 9d., and all this in spite of—or, rather, let me say side by side with—increased zeal at home in spiritual and financial matters, and *an enormous increase in church and cathedral restoration.*' Facts and figures, like those adduced by Canon Crozier, speak volumes, and go further towards proving that the Church of Ireland has gained, on the whole, more than it has lost by Disestablishment than a thousand words of assertion based on mere opinion or speculation. Then there was the statement of the Archbishop of Dublin. And certainly it could not be said that Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland had destroyed one of the bulwarks of Christianity."

He now came to the concluding sentence—

"It seems to me quite reasonable to assume that if in a poor country like Ireland Disestablishment has been beneficial, then in Wales the Churchmen have nothing to fear from the effects of a similar Act if applied to the Principality. Judging by the current of popular opinion the days of the Establishment in Wales are numbered, and being numbered, it will be well for the Welsh clergy to learn wisdom from the lessons of the Irish Church, and be prepared for what seems inevitable."

He had thought it to be his duty to bring these very remarkable statements, prepared by a correspondent sent by a Tory newspaper to report on the effect to be produced by Disestablishment in Wales, before the House. It was time that this controversy, so full of painful incidents and memories, should come to an end. No doubt it had its bright and glorious side. It had stirred to the depths the emotional and susceptible nature of the Welsh people, and had drawn out all their higher and nobler instincts and qualities. It had lifted them to a higher plane, not only of religious, but of intellectual and political life. It had filled them with a passionate desire for knowledge, and had made the Welsh peasant, collier, small tradesmen, and artizan thoughtful and intelligent students. It had enabled them to realise that there was a great future for them, if they only had a fair chance. But it had done its work of training. They were now prepared for that future—and would no longer be denied or trifled with. The Welsh people would never lower the banner of religious freedom and equality which they had carried forward with such desperate tenacity and self-denial until they had gained the great moral victory for which they had fought so long.

*Mr. A. S. T. GRIFFITH - BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said, there were one or two points raised in the Debate to which he should like to have an opportunity of replying. He would not occupy much time in reply to the last speaker. The hon. Member's speech appeared to be a long series of quotations from a Tory Commissioner in Ireland; but he could not see why, because an agent of the Conservative Party found defects in the Irish Church, that was any reason why they should Disestablish and Disendow the Welsh Church. The hon. Gentleman complained of the strong language used on the Opposition side of the House. He did not think it was fair to say that any strong language, any abuse, any personalities had been introduced in the Debate on one side or the other. He thanked the Home Secretary for the tone in which he began the Debate, and other hon. Members for recognising that the opponents of this measure felt deeply with reference to this question. He was also prepared to recognise that hon. Gentlemen opposite also felt deeply on the other side of the question, and that they were actuated by deep and conscientious motives. But when they looked from the House of Commons to the country and noted the language which was used there, especially in Wales, he thought a different story could be told. The *Baner* of April 13, 1892, printed and circulated a statement to the effect that Churchmen were big old babes throughout the ages, that they had been carried by others, and had sucked the breasts to which they had no right, that they lived on other people, and that it was the greatest pity that those who professed to be the successors of the Apostle should place themselves only to be classed with creatures of prey. This was from the organ of Mr. Gee, the author of this Liberationist "crusade," as the hon. Member called it, and rightly, because this movement could not be described as a spontaneous expression of the people. Now Mr. Gee might be made a Welsh Commissioner under this Bill. There was no test to be applied; he might be a *persona grata* with the Treasury Bench or the Welsh National Party, and he might administer the funds of the Disendowed Church. Mr. Gee had been the Chairman of the Denbighshire County Council; and under this Bill the County Council was to collect the tithe. The County Council had to hand over what tithe it collected for a vested interest to the Incumbent for the time being of any parish. Looking at the animus thus displayed in this extraordinary language about the Church, he asked what guarantee had they that the County Council would collect the tithes at all? They were aware that in Cardiganshire, at the present moment, the tithes were not collected. The Home Secretary admitted that 150 orders for tithes were unexecuted in Cardiganshire at the present time. A large number of those orders for tithes were not for Church but for lay tithes; and yet, because the County Council was in collusion with the Anti-Tithe League, and would not allow the police to be got together to collect the tithe, a large number of laymen were not able to get their tithes now. Did the House think there was the slightest chance of the County Council collecting the tithes and handing them over to clergymen about whom they had used strong language of the character quoted? A wonderful change had come over the complexion of the County Councils in Wales during the last few weeks. It was quite true that previously hon. Members opposite had obtained an enormous majority, and it was true also that at those elections the question put forward was the Disestablishment of the Church. What was the result this time? In a large number of counties, Conservative majorities had been returned. In Denbighshire, there was a Conservative majority, and Mr. Gee had been turned off, and Carnarvonshire had elected a Conservative Chairman. When this question was really fought out in Wales, he believed that the opponents of this measure would be found to be stronger than the representation of the House of Commons showed them to be at the present time. They were told that there were only three Welsh Members against Disestablishment in the House. He admitted the fact; but he contended that at the last General Election the question before the Welsh electors was not Disestablishment but Home Rule. On the First Reading of the Bill he showed that hon. Gentlemen opposite had put forward Home Rule first, and not Disestablishment, in their election programmes; and the hon Member for Mid Glamorgan had himself shown that a large number of the Unionist candidates were themselves Disestablishers; then how could the defeat of a Unionist, who, like his opponent, was in favour of Disestablishment, or refused to drag out the question because he wished Home Rule to be before the people, be construed into a defeat of the Church in Wales? It was not a defeat, because the question was not before the people at the last election. The hon. Member for Mid Glamorgan told him the statistics he and others had given were wrong, because they had added up the total Unionist vote and claimed all those votes for the Church. He willingly admitted that some of the Unionist candidates were in favour of Disestablishment. He was wrong in that particular. What followed? Let them go back to the 1886 election, when the Unionist candidates, Conservative and Liberal Unionist, all declared themselves against Disestablishment, and when the electors did vote on the Church question. [Mr. Lloyd-George: "No."] There might have been one or two instances in which the candidates did not do so, but he was certain the hon. Member would admit that the majority of the candidates in 1886 did say, distinctly and openly, they were against Disestablishment, whereas in 1892 they did not. In 1886 the Unionists polled 2,345 more votes than they polled in 1892, in the constituencies in question—in other words, when this question was put fairly and squarely before the Welsh people the Unionists polled more votes than when they burked the question and put it in the background. It was asked what was the use of hon. Members on the Opposition Benches trying to delay the passing of this Bill? The reason why he and his friends were determined to fight the Bill was, that judging from everything they saw in Wales—by the manner in which the people were coming back to the Church, and even by so trivial an incident as the County Council elections—they believed time was on their side. The Church might have been weak—it had been weak—but it was now growing every day, and its supporters were determined to put off this question until the time when the Church was so strong that Disestablishment would be entirely impossible. [Mr. Lloyd-George: "When"?] Very soon. He thought the hon. Member would see a very marked change at the next election. The hon. Gentleman and his friends were determined to push the matter forward as quickly as they could because they knew time was against them, and unless they were able to get Disestablishment and Disendowment very shortly the opportunity would be gone. The Home Secretary had given them three local reasons why this Measure should be passed. The first was that in Wales the Sunday scholars of the Nonconformist bodies vastly outnumbered the Sunday scholars of the Church. The answer to that was that the Church Sunday scholar was a very different person to the Nonconformist Sunday scholar; there was no comparison between the two. Was it fair then to make a numerical comparison?

*Mr. J. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): Is the hon. Gentleman prepared to tell us where we can obtain the particulars from which the totals of Church attendance are made up?

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said, he had not given any total. He was taking the Home Secretary's figures. It had been proved in the Debate that in addition to the fact that no comparison could be made between the two classes of Sunday scholars, the Home Secretary had over-estimated the number of Sunday scholars of the Nonconformists by no less a figure than 80,000. The right hon. Gentleman's second local argument was, that in 27 parishes in Anglesey there was no resident clergyman, practically no services, and in some cases no buildings. The answer to that was abundantly supplied by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Sir E. Clarke), when he showed that in 76 parishes in Anglesey there were 67 clergymen, whereas there were 83 chapels of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists and only 56 ministers. He (Mr. Boscawen) had received a letter from the Bishop of Bangor, in which his Lordship said—

> "These parishes, 27 in number, according to Mr. Asquith, but 19 at most according to my calculation, have a total population of 3,000, and the tithes amount to just £1,100, and not £7,000, as stated by Mr. Asquith."

He added—

> "Church work in Anglesey goes on as regularly and as vigorously as in any part of Wales, and some of the parishes are exceptionally strong. There are, of course, a very few peccant spots."

That disposed of the second local argument of the Home Secretary. What was the third local argument? It was that the communicants of the Nonconformist bodies largely outnumbered the communicants of the Church of England. This was a subject he approached with some diffidence; it was one he regretted had been dragged into the Debate. But he submitted that here again there was no fair comparison to be made. Any impartial man, any clergyman of the Church of England who was not a Party man, any leading Nonconformist in England who understood the question and was not a Party man, would tell them that a perfectly different thing was meant by being a Church of England communicant and by being a Nonconformist communicant. But, apart from that, the figures given by the Home Secretary as to the communicants of the Church of England related to those who communicated on Easter Day, 1892, while the figures he gave as to the communicants of the Nonconformist bodies related to those who might communicate at any time during the year. What fair comparison could possibly be made between the two? But if any argument were to be derived from the question of the number of communicants it was this—that in Wales there had been a remarkable increase in the number of communicants during the last few years. He had been accused of merely stating the figures which have been given by the Church Defence Association, and therefore could not quote any figures from that source to-night. The Bishop of Bangor wrote him:—

> "In one parish in my diocese, the parish is a town where, in 1893, the number was 137, in 1894 it was 277, and I believe, as a matter of fact, that the total roll would amount to at least 500."

There had been an enormous increase of late in the number of Church communicants; and, therefore, if ever the Bill might have been fair and just, it might have been just and fair some years ago, but certainly not now. Nonconformists had given the number of their communicants as 45 per cent. of their adherents. It was not for him to question that estimate. He was willing to accept the percentage; and he thought that at the same time Nonconformists should accept the percentage given by Churchmen. The Home Secretary had quoted 118,000 as the number of communicants in Wales, and taking the communicants as being 16 per cent. of the adherents of the Church in Wales,—which was not too high an estimate, for in England, as stated in "The Church of England Year Book," it was 8 per cent.—that gave the adherents at 786,000, which was two-fifths of the population, as Churchmen had always claimed. He thought, therefore, he was entitled to say that, if the case for the Bill depended on the local agreements of the Home Secretary, the case was a very weak one indeed. But the Home Secretary also gave historical reasons. The right hon. Gentleman had thrown over the Liberationist Society and the Prime Minister, an example which had been followed by the hon. Member for Bedfordshire in the interesting and able speech he had made that afternoon. The hon. Member for Bedfordshire had said that the Conservative Party, in following a man who had voted for the Second Reading of the Irish Church Bill, were following a man who was a national sinner. But the Liberal Party was following a man who had been inaccurate in his view of Church history, The Prime Minister had spoken of the transfer at the time of the Reformation, and seemed to contemplate that the Church, instead of being reformed at the Reformation, came into existence at that particular period. But they had had from the Home Secretary, and other supporters of the Bill, an admission of the historical continuity of the Church. That meant that the Church in Wales was the most thoroughly national institution in Wales; and it meant, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian in his remarkable book on "The Church in its Relation to the State," that the ministers of the Church were—

> "Ordained hereditary ministers of the Truth, conveying it to us through an unbroken series from the Apostles themselves."

But the Home Secretary had said that the Church, though historically national, had become denationalised, and to prove that the right hon. Gentleman instanced, first of all, that it had been plundered by England and especially by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Twelfth Century and again in the Eighteenth Century, and that except for a few "brief and rare" intervals it had always been treated as a mere dependency of the English Church. But the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten the whole Tudor period and the whole Stuart period, in regard to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had said—

> "There is not a more curious fact in History than this: there are four sees in Wales, and yet between the Reign of Henry VIII. and the Revolution, no less than forty-four Welshmen were appointed to fill them."

The intervals referred to by the Home Secretary during this period of 200 years might have been rare but they were not brief. They were so long that they could not help being rare. But even supposing there had been a break in the historical continuity of the Church, surely that was no reason why the Church should now be deprived of her Endowments? For his part he only asked for religious equality. It was said that the subject of the Bill was to secure religious equality. He did not see any religious equality in the Bill. He did not see equality in depriving the Church of her Endowments and leaving to the Nonconformists an absolute right to their buildings and Endowments. In the case of the Nonconformists, by the Dissenters' Chapels Act 1842, 25 years' possession was deemed a sufficient title even when their doctrines had changed. Then why should 300 years' possession—to go no further back than the Reformation—not be deemed sufficient to secure the same right in the case of the Church? Churchmen had no desire to take away a penny of the Endowments of the Nonconformists. Indeed they were glad the Nonconformists had those Endowments to assist them in the great, noble, and Christian work in which they were engaged. But Church people said to Nonconformists: "Treat us as we treat you; live and let live; deal out that measure of justice to the Church which we, as Christian men and women, give to you." It was also proposed to mete out to the Welsh Church different treatment from the treatment accorded to the Irish Church when it was Disestablished in 1869. The Irish Church at that time claimed 667,000 adherents out of a population of 5,500,000. The Welsh Church claimed rather more, for it claimed to have 786,000 adherents, out of a population of 1,177,000. But after Disendowment the Irish Church had £7,500,000 by commutation to start with and £500,000 by private benefactions. The Irish Act provided that the purchase value was to be 22½ years of the net annual value. Take the existing endowment in the case of Wales. The present capitalised value at the same rate of the endowment of the Church in Wales was £3,600,000; or, in other words, the Church now, before Disestablishment, possessed £4,000,000 less than the Irish Church possessed after Disestablishment

*Mr. A. S. T. Griffith-Boscawen.*

and Disendowment. And yet this miserably small endowment, which did not amount to more than £170 a year, on the average, for each incumbent, and which was much too little for the needs of the Principality, it was proposed to take away. It had been said, and it had been denied, that in the event of this Bill passing, many parishes would be left without pastoral care. From his knowledge of Wales and his acquaintance with the poverty of many of the parishes, he regarded it as almost certain that there would be many where it would be impossible to maintain a resident clergyman, and such parishes would have to be grouped together. Though the endowment was small, and though the population was very poor, the parishes in Wales were of enormous extent in area, and it was a physical impossibility at the present moment for one clergyman to work the parish he had got, but if grouped with others then large portions of the population of the parish would be left without his care at all. In half the parishes there was no resident Nonconformist minister, and these were just the poor parishes in which it would be impossible to maintain a resident clergyman. There would thus be many parishes where there might be services on Sunday and where the work would be done as well as it could be under the circumstances, but he did not think that religion in this country depended only on such services. There was also that fostering care in the work of helping the poor and the needy, and the constant visiting that went on at the present moment. All these, by the passing of this Bill, would be absent, and the result would be that not the Church alone, but religion generally throughout Wales, would suffer a grievous blow. Not only was it the case that a large number of parishes had no resident Nonconformist minister, but a large number of those ministers had not the time or leisure to devote themselves solely to the duties of their ministry. At the present moment there were 569 Calvinistic Methodist ministers in Wales, 191 of whom were shopkeepers, farmers, commercial travellers, and agents, while 12 were engaged in educational work, and only 356 could be described as ministers pure and simple. His idea of a minister of religion was a man who gave his whole time to the work of his ministry, and he said it would be a grievous thing for Wales if the parishes were left to the care of men who could only devote one-seventh of their time to pastoral work. Who would suffer? The people seemed to think the clergy would suffer, or that the rich would suffer. He fully admitted that the rich men would have to put their hands into their pockets, and not only so, but he was afraid they would, in many cases, be obliged to withdraw the subscriptions they now gave to charitable objects in order to support resident clergymen. Lord Macaulay had been quoted in this Debate already, and he would add one more quotation. Speaking in that House in April, 1845, Lord Macaulay used these words:—

> "If I would keep up the Established Church of England, it is not for the sake of the Lords, Baronets, and county gentlemen of £5,000 a year, and rich bankers in the City. The person about whom I am uneasy is the working man. What is to become of him under the Voluntary system?"

Yes, what was to become of the working men in Wales and Monmouthshire when they left them to the Voluntary system, which gave them half the parishes with possibly no resident minister of religion, and where the idea of hon. Members opposite was that ministers of religion could spend six days out of the seven on purely secular work? He wished to mention one other matter, and that was the cathedrals clause, which had given the greatest pain to Churchmen on his side of the House. That clause was inconsistent with the rest of the Bill. The rest of the Bill proposed that private endowments given since 1703 should be left to the Church, and he asked, were not the hundreds of thousands of pounds given by the Church people for restoring these cathedrals morally as much private endowments as the shilling or half-crown any man might put into the collection plate in Church next Sunday? They might not be private endowments under the Bill, but they were strictly private endowments, morally because they were intended for the Church. What were they going to do? Were they going to take away the old part of the Cathedral and leave to the Church the restoration work? Were they going to try and separate the old stones from the new work which kept them all together? The proposal of the Government reminded him of Portia and Shylock. Shylock could not take his pound of flesh and yet, at the same time, not shed a drop of Christian blood. It was just the same with these cathedrals. They could not separate what was ancient —national monuments—and what were private benefactions given a few years ago. He hoped, whatever else happened to this Bill, that this clause might be thrown out. These cathedrals were built by the Church, not a single penny had ever been spent on them by the nation, their restoration had been accomplished by Churchmen in the present century, and they should be handed over, as in the case of Ireland, to the Church to which they had always belonged. He knew hon. Members, and especially those sitting below the Gangway, had asked why he, an English Member should take such an interest in this question. His reply was that as an English Member he had a vital interest in it, because this Bill did not merely Disestablish and Disendow the Church in Wales, but it mutilated the whole English Church. The Bill broke up the Ecclesiastical Commission and Convocation—almost every clause affected the vital interests of the Church of England. Therefore, as an English Member, he had a right, as a member of the predominant partner to say whether, in his view, the Bill ought to become law or not. He might not represent a single Welshman in this House, but the views he held were shared by thousands of Welshmen who were as truly patriotic Welshmen as any Members in this House, who loved the history of Wales, its language, literature, and national characteristics, but who loved, above all, their National Church, and who looked to the Church as the oldest, the proudest, the most truly Welsh institution in the Principality. And although he represented an English constituency, because he felt this Bill would strike a fatal blow, and would immensely retard the progress of that institution which was dearest to his heart, he, along with thousands of other Welshmen, would strain every nerve to resist this Bill to the utmost of his ability.

Mr. D. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Distict) remarked that, although the hon. Member claimed to be a Welshman, he mentioned certain Welsh names which he was unable to pronounce. The statistical calculations he had brought forward were a fair example of how the statistics in support of the Welsh Church were cooked. The way they were arrived at was this. In England, they were told, the proportion of communicants to adherents was 8 per cent. The hon. Member, by some process which he did not explain, had come to the conclusion that that proportion was too low in Wales, and, accordingly, he put it at 16 per cent.

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN pointed out that the higher he put the percentage, the smaller became the total number of adherents. If he took it at 8 per cent. he would have included, in some cases, the whole of the Welsh population.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is exactly my point, and the statement only shows how these figures are arrived at. Two clergymen recently wrote to a Church newspaper, and they were incautious enough to give the number of communicants in their respective parishes. In one parish, according to the estimate of the rector, the communicants numbered 70, and there were 120 communicants belonging to the Methodist Church in the same parish. If they multiplied the 70 by 6 there would be 420 adherents belonging to the Church of England in that district, which, added to the 120 communicants belonging to the Methodists, brought up the population to 540, whereas the whole population only amounted to 312. There was another rector who computed that he had 160 communicants in his parish; therefore the number of adherents of the Church, according to the hon. Member, were 960, but the whole population of that parish was only 537. That was the way these statistics were got up. They came not from hon. Members but from St. Asaph; that was where they were prepared. The hon. Member indulged in a prediction with regard to the speedy extinction of Nonconformity and its influence in Wales, and in order to that he referred to the County Council elections in Denbighshire, which were not on political issues at all. But directly they won a victory for the Tory side they said, look at the way the

Church has been supported by the Principality. The Welsh people would not forget that lesson when the next County Council election came round. The hon. Member also referred to the election of a Conservative Chairman on the Carnarvon County Council as a signal triumph for the Church in Wales. He was astonished the hon. Member should use that fact at all. In that County Council, of which he was a member and an alderman, the Liberals were in a majority of two to one. They met in a kind of caucus before the Council, and they decided unanimously to elect a Conservative as Chairman. That was a gracious act, and he did not think the hon. Member was entitled to make political capital out of it. He did not propose to follow the hon. Member in his examination of the details of the Bill. What criticism he passed upon the Bill last year he fully adhered to, and when the time came he should propose Amendments to carry out his views with regard to compensation. He should also like to see some Amendments made with regard to cathedrals and lay tithes. He preferred on this occasion to deal with the general principles involved in the Bill. They had been told repeatedly in the course of the Debate, that the Disendowment proposals of this measure were tantamount to robbery of the Church. His first point upon that was this—that if the House of Commons came to the conclusion that Disestablishment was necessary in the interests of the religion of the Principality, Disendowment was a corollary. For this reason, that Establishment was an essential element of the tithe of the Church to its property. Hon. Members were too apt to overlook two points. The first was that this was not a question of doctrine or ritual. The main claim of the Church to its property depended entirely upon its being recognised by Parliament as the National Church. He stated that on the authority of Lord Selborne, who said in his work that the main argument in favour of the retention of Endowments was the fact that, whatever the changes in doctrine might have been in the course of history, the Church, from the national point of view, was the same. Lord Selborne said that when he was arguing out the question of the Church of England, though he noticed he did not use that argument when he came to the Appendix and was discussing the Welsh Church, because it was on a totally different footing. He did not think any hon. Member would argue that a Church, the national character of which was repudiated by 31 out of the 34 representatives of Wales in that House, could possibly claim to be the national Church. They asked the House of Commons by means of an Act of Parliament to give legal recognition to what was already an established fact—that the Church in Wales had ceased to be the national Church of the Welsh people. His second point was that hon. Members overlooked the fact that the clergy were not the beneficiaries of this property. They were simply the trustees, and they said that, owing to circumstances over which they as a nation had no control—circumstances for which the clergy themselves were responsible in the last century—a majority of the beneficiaries were not at the present moment in the enjoyment of their share of the property. Therefore they came to Parliament and asked them to readjust this property; to change the trust deeds, and to alter the administration of the trust in such a way that the whole of the beneficiaries of the trust should receive benefit from it, and not merely a section. If that were pillage and robbery, all he could say was that there was hardly a month when the Court of Chancery did not sanction a scheme of pillage and robbery almost identical with the principle which they were asking the House of Commons to sanction. Since this Debate had commenced he had taken the trouble to put in the form of an indictment the charge which was made against the people of Wales in connection with this agitation. He had only to state it for the House of Commons to see the absurdity of it. They were told that the majority of the people of Wales, not in a fit of passion, but after mature reflection, had entered upon a pillaging and plundering enterprise. For fully 20 years they had stuck to it on the advice of their spiritual guides, bucause it was only quite recently that the mere political feature had entered into the question at all. They were prompted in this agitation, according to hon. Members, by some of the basest motives that could possibly animate the human heart. Greed, jealousy, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness—that was the indictment brought against the Welsh people. He would ask hon. Members opposite to dismiss their prejudices for a moment, and reflect calmly what was the nature of the charge they were bringing against the whole Principality. Could it be imagined that an agitation such as hon. Members described it could have been successfully carried on for a period of 50 years without utterly demoralising any nation? If the Welsh people robbed Churches they would rob their neighbours. Yet, what did they find? The gaol delivery in Wales was a perfect farce at the present time, except, indeed, in that remote corner where the Welsh people are in a minority, and where he observed that *The Times* newspaper predicted a great Unionist victory at the next election. After years of this so-called immoral agitation, there were no prisoners to try at the Assizes, except for an occasional tramp over the border. Could anyone believe that if the agitation had been immoral, as it was described by hon. Members opposite, that would have been the effect upon the criminality of the Welsh people? He asked the House to take a wider and more charitable view, and to believe that the Welsh people knew their own history and their own needs better than hon. Gentlemen, however able and however honest they might be, who simply got up these circumstances when Wales happened to be relevant to the politics of the hour. The Welsh people had come to the conclusion that this property belonged to them, and that they were simply asking Parliament to give them restitution of their just inheritance. After all, Endowment depended entirely upon Disestablishment, and if the House should come to the conclusion that it was unnecessary to maintain religious Establishment in Wales, then he contended that it was unfair that the property of the Church, which was the property of the Welsh people as a whole, should be handed over to a small section only of that people. Were hon. Members sure that they were advancing the cause of religion by keeping up Establishment against the wish of the Welsh people? It was very difficult to square an argument by the differences in the speeches of the various Members opposed to this Bill. By one they were told that they must not refer only to the past 50 years; by another that they must not go back too far, as if they did, they were only resurrecting ancient grievances. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Sir E. Clarke) said that they must not refer to the period of the Norman Kings, but that they might refer to a period 13 centuries ago and long before the Norman Kings. But, taken by the test of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach), establishment had proved a complete failure in Wales. The true test of Establishment was not to be arrived at by taking a period of the Church when its Endowments were threatened, but by seeing what was its condition at a time when there was nothing to prompt the priesthood except the ministry of their holy calling. The right hon. Member for Bristol referred to the Tudor period as one at which the Church was a great spiritual institution doing a great work. He asserted, however, that at no period since the Reformation had the Church properly performed its functions. Fifty years after the Reformation only two or three sermons in a year were preached throughout the whole of Wales. An eminent clergyman of the Church of England, who was chaplain to Sir H. Sidney in 1753, wrote strongly against the condition of the Church in Wales at that time. Fifty years later, so far from the Church having improved, she had, in fact, deteriorated, and Vicar Pritchard, another eminent Churchman, then described her condition as "deplorable." He had the authority of another eminent Welshman, John Edwards, for stating that, in 1651, barely 1 in 15 among the clerical teachers in the Church of England in Wales could read or write Welsh. That was the testimony of a clergyman 120 years after the Reformation. The right hon. Member for Bristol and other hon. Members had admitted that 50 or 60 years after that period the Church in Wales absolutely neglected her spiritual duties, and, taking the best of the period chosen by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, he contended that at that time also the establishment proved to be a conspicuous failure. Then what was the story of the revival? It commenced, according to the figures of the Bishop of St. Asaph, in 1850. But five years before that the Liberation Society had started operations in the Principality. Large conferences and meetings were held. There was every appearance of unanimity among the people on the question of Disestablishment, and there could be no doubt that, if the people had been enfranchised at that time, they would have returned a preponderating majority of Members to make the same demand that the Welsh Members were making now. Then came the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, and it was at this time that the new era began in the Church in Wales. What did this prove? That while the services of the Church in Wales were indispensable because there was no other organisation to do the work, she did nothing but mischief; but when other agencies covered the ground then she began to work. What would hon. Members think of a servant who, when his services were really needed did nothing, and when his services were otherwise provided for he insisted upon doing everything? That was the condition of the Church in Wales. Taking the Church, even at the present moment, he contended that her work in Wales would not bear comparison with the spiritual work which was done by the Nonconformists in the Welsh Free Churches. The Church in Wales commanded nine-tenths of the wealth of the Principality, and yet the religious efforts of that wealthy Church sank into insignificance when compared with those of the poorer Church of the small tradesman, the small farmer, and the labourer. Several Welsh Members had referred to the case of the Rhondda Valley, and, therefore, he would refer to it no further than to add that the Nonconformists in that valley had built 120 churches, as against 16 only built by the Church of England, and that, while the Nonconformists had collected all the money necessary to build those churches among themselves, the Established Church in Wales had made appeals in all quarters of the United Kingdom for obtaining funds in order to carry on its ministrations at all. He might cite another case, that of a town which had risen into prominence during the last five years. In 1887 there were two Nonconformist chapels in that town and one Church; but now the Nonconformists had 22 chapels there, while the Establishment had only three Endowed Churches, two mission rooms, and he believed one Welsh missionary. He believed they were building another church now. That had happened in the course of five years, and had been done, not by a Welsh, but by an English, population. In the case of another parish, where the clergyman had stated that Disendowment, pure and simple, would totally paralyse Church-work, as all the inhabitants were of the working class, the Calvinistic Methodists alone, in that district, had about a dozen chapels, with 1,738 communicants; they had Sunday schools with 3,500 members, and they collected £1,869 every year towards the cause. Did not that prove the absolute superiority of the Voluntary over the Endowed system? A good deal depended on the way in which those subscriptions were given. In his own parish there had been two buildings in the last two years—one of the Church of England, the other of the Calvinistic Methodists; the Church spent £4,000, and the Calvinistic Methodists £3,000; but the first sum was given by one gentleman, while the second was given by the quarrymen and labourers who frequented the chapel. The accounts of a chapel in the quarry district of Carnarvonshire showed that, eliminating subscriptions of more than £5, each family gave about £2 a year towards the cause, and that was given by men who earned about £2 a week. How did that compare with the church of Bryn Eglwys, where, according to the computation of the Rector, there were 70 communicants, amongst whom were the resident landowners in the district? The annual contributions in that case amounted to £20 a year. The labourers and poor people in the same parish collected £116 a year. They had been told that if there were no endowed ministers the poor would be neglected, and there would be no one to look after them. That was a curious comment on the principle of Endowment. When the church was a Voluntary system the pious ancestors of present Churchmen not only looked after their poor, but provided for the poor of all time; but after a thousand years of an Endowed Church they had become so degenerate that they could not look after even their own poor. Anyone who knew Welshmen, however, would know that it was an absolute insult to say that they would not look after their poor, needy, and suffering. Shortly before he came up to the House, in his own parish a pauper fell sick, nearly to death, and instantly the whole of his own Calvinistic Methodist church divided themselves into relays of two to visit the sick man day after day and wait upon him, from the richest among them to the poorest. Such cases occurred frequently. It was argued that if they Disendowed the Church there would be no resident minister in 300 or 400 parishes in Wales. The Home Secretary had dealt in one respect with that very effectively; he had pointed out that the Nonconformist system in Wales was a system of itinerant ministers. But it was not merely that: it was a system of itinerant ministers and a system of elders; and the elder, from a pastoral point of view, was a much more important person than the itinerant minister. Who were the elders? It was well the House should know to whom it was proposed to entrust the spiritual interest of the people in Wales. As a rule, the elders were men of unblemished character, men known their fellow members, men who had done good service to their churches, and who were selected on account of their character and their superior intelligence to look after the interests of Nonconformist churches in parishes where there was no resident minister. He would give a parish in Carnarvonshire as an illustration. The parish was in a desolate district, it was miles removed from any railroad or highway, it was in the very heart of the mountains, it was cut off from the surrounding country by a range of hills, it was very sparsely populated, the farm houses were at long intervals, and it was almost inaccessible in winter owing to drifts of snow and floods. There was no resident minister except the clergyman of the Church of England, and he took it that if the Church were Disendowed that clergyman would not find it worth while to remain there, as the only congregation he had was his own son. What had the Nonconformists done there? For the last 60 years they had had a chapel of their own. There were 70 members of that chapel. There was an active Sunday School of about 75 members, and there was collected in the year something like £37 10s. 0d., which showed the people were rather poor. He did not believe that in the roughest weather there had been a single Sunday on which a meeting had not been held in the chapel. Not only that, but in the course of the week there were two or three meetings. A short time ago the people built another chapel in the upper part of the valley for the convenience of the infirm members of the congregation, and they had paid for the chapel out of their earnings. That was done in a parish where there was no resident minister. The main argument used by hon. Members opposite was that without a resident minister the poor would be neglected. He had, he thought, proved that Nonconformity was able to compete with the demand made on its resources. But that was not all. He said that the influence of Establishment upon the Church in Wales had been exceedingly demoralising. What was the usual argument advanced to induce men to attend church. It was said:—

> "In the Church you are not bothered with demands for subscriptions; you have not the collection-plate constantly before you; and if you do not attend Church meetings you will not be pestered with questions."

When such boons were offered as an inducement to maintain a Church, it was only a small step to offering people material inducements to attend Church, and, unfortunately, this was too frequently done. He knew of two cases in his own parish in which the clergyman offered material advantages to members of other denominations to attend the Church. A remarkable speech was delivered a short time ago at a Church Defence meeting which was held in Penrhyn Castle, and was attended by nearly all the clergy of North Wales. There was only one reporter admitted, and, therefore, the report was—he would not say cooked—but not a fair and candid one. There was one speech in particular which was left out; it was delivered by a gentleman who bore the honoured name of Wynne. He said:—

> "Perhaps there are present some clergymen who hail from remote country parishes, where the parish Church is attended by the parson and the clerk and a solitary farmer, whose attendance is due to sordid considerations."

This speech was delivered by an ardent defender of the Church, but it was suppressed in the report which appeared on the following morning. It bore out the suggestion that considerations of this kind were offered to persons to attend church and swell the number of communicants. What better proof could there be of the demoralising effect of the State connection? Another proof was furnished by the petitions against the Suspensory Bill, to which little or no allusion has been made by hon. Members opposite in the course of the present Debate.

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said, that he had given the numbers of signatures on both sides in the Debate on the Bill of last year.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said, it was a remarkable fact, if these petitions were genuine, that so little use had been made of them on the other side. The reason was that written declarations had been presented to the Committee on Petitions showing that an enormous number of signatures had been actually forged. As had been remarked by the Chairman of the Committee, himself a Conservative, many of the names appeared to him of clerical handwriting. Then many signatures had been obtained by gross misrepresentation from farmers' labourers, labourers' wives, and people who did not appreciate the political bearing of the question, and who were told that the object of the petition was to prevent the introduction of Irish Popery into Wales. A good deal had been said about the Gee census. He remembered that when it was taken the members of one Church congregation, as soon as they had been counted, hurried off to a second church in order to be counted again. In another case monoglot Welshmen attended an English service, and monoglot Englishmen remained for the Welsh service. All this went to prove that the State connection was demoralising to the Church in Wales. It was not surprising that in these circumstances some clergymen were clamouring for reform. At the Defence meeting at Penrhyn Castle the Lord Lieutenant of the county made a speech in which he contended that reform was absolutely necessary. He had a letter from a clergyman, in which he declared his opinion that reform in the Church would be impossible without Disestablishment. He asked hon. Members opposite whether, after all, they did not think that, in the interests of their own Church, this connection with the State, which did so much to degrade and corrupt the Church herself, should not be done away with. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol said that this was a question for England. Even if it were so, he asked hon. Members for England what had they to gain from a system which forced their Church into practices of the kind he had referred to in order to maintain its supremacy in Wales. But he maintained, as a Welshman, that this was a question for Wales alone. In a matter of commerce or material prosperity, he admitted the right of the Imperial Parliament to subordinate the interests of a small part of the Empire to the interests of the whole, but in a matter of religion he denied the right of an Empire to sacrifice the spiritual well-being of the humblest nationality. This was a matter in which Welsh property was concerned. They had been told about the money given 1,000 years ago by England. It was not given by England. It was given by Welshmen for the benefit of Welshmen, and it ought to be applied in the interests of Welshmen. It was on behalf of the Welsh people that 31 out of 34 of the Welsh representatives in the House protested against a State connection, which they maintained was doing damage to the cause of religion in the Principality, and that they entreated the House to apply their national property for better, holier, and more Christian ends, in assuaging suffering, in succouring distress, in relieving and, if possible, redeeming their people, by giving them that training and discipline which would enable them to overcome and compete with those evils which the present system encouraged.

**Sir J. GORST** (Cambridge University) observed that the hon. Member for Carnarvon had spoken on behalf of the Welsh people; he had spoken with authority as representing the Welsh people. He wished to be allowed to say a few words before the Debate closed on behalf of another class of the Welsh nation—those who were the adherents of the Church in Wales. They had not many direct representatives in the House, but many of them were his constituents, and, therefore, he felt, to some extent, bound to represent their case. They might be a minority of the Welsh people, but minorities deserved to be treated with justice, and all he wished to claim from the House was that they should treat with justice those Welshmen who belonged to the Church. He should have said before he heard the speech of the hon. Member for Carvarvon that the two parts of the Bill—the Disestablishment part and the Disendowment part—were entirely distinct, and that, although they were embodied in the same Bill and generally spoken of in the same breath, there was no necessary connection between Disestablishment and Disendowment. But the hon. Member for Carnarvon had stated it otherwise, and he would deal with his arguments when he came to them; but he wished to say a few words on each of those branches, and to endeavour to point out how those Welshmen who were members of the Church in Wales would be treated with injustice if that Church were Disestablished, and would also be treated with injustice if that Church were Disendowed. He would take the Disestablishment first. The House ought to bear in mind that Establishment was not the invention of the present adherents of the Church, but that they had inherited it from their forefathers through a long course of history. They having inherited this organisation, what justification was there for meddling with them and not leaving them alone? The first argument that had been used in that Debate was the argument that it was for their good that they should be Disestablished. He should not like to be so ungracious as to say that one did not place very implicit faith in an argument of that kind when it was advanced by those who, both by words and acts, had shown themselves not to be any good friends of the Church about which they were so solicitous. He did not want to rake up unnecessarily the old memory of the Clergy Discipline Bill of 1892, when the very same men who had since almost forced the present Bill upon the attention of Parliament distinguished themselves by a hostility to the Church which excited the very strong reprobation of the right hon. Member for Midlothian. He only referred to this to excuse Members on his side of the House for not attaching too much importance to arguments coming from such persons when those arguments were intended to show that this Measure would be an advantage to the Church. As practical men they could dispose of these arguments by another consideration. Surely in these days they could leave people who were interested in the maintenance of an existing state of things to decide whether it was good or bad for them, and among members of the Church of England and in Wales only a very small minority considered that it was to the interest of the Church that it should be Disestablished. They had had an interesting proof of the existence of such persons in the bosom of the Church that evening. He referred to the eloquent address of the hon. Member for North Beds, every word of whose speech went to show that the Church in England ought to be Disestablished as well as the Church in Wales. It was not an argument for this Bill, but for a wider Bill for the Disestablishment of the whole Church. He thought, therefore, that they might dismiss the idea of Disestablishment for the benefit of the Church itself. The next argument that had been advanced was that the Church ought to be Disestablished for the purpose of religious equality. He had listened very attentively to the illustrations given by the Home Secretary and other Members of the alleged injury inflicted upon Nonconformists by the existence of Church Establishment, and he had failed to gather a single instance of real injury. The existence of the Establishment in no way abridged either the civil or religious liberty of the Nonconformists There was a time when such an argument could have been used with very great force and effect, for there was a day when the Church of England, like other religious bodies was a tyrannical and persecuting institution. When the spirit of religious liberty first sprang up in this country, a strong case might have been made for the Disestablishment of this persecuting Church, which then possessed real ascendency, and it might have been abolished, just as the Star Chamber and many other institutions of that time were abolished. There were two courses open to the Reformers of that day. One was to abolish the Church altogether, and the other was so to alter its constitution as to take from it every kind of persecuting quality, and to establish civil and religious liberty, side by side with an establishment. The latter course was taken. The present Bill was an anachronism ; it ought to have been brought in a century ago. It then might have been said that the continued existence of the Establishment was inconsistent with religious liberty, but no one could now point to a single instance in which the existence of the Church as an Establishment inflicted any practical injury whatever upon either the conscience or the liberty of those who did not belong to its Communion. He had heard that Welsh speakers had recommended Disestablishment upon the ground that it would put an end to tithe, and the Home Secretary gave a good deal of colour to that statement, for he said that the enforcement of tithe by the machinery and the arm of the law was an incident of a Church Establishment. Therefore, presumably, if the Church Establishment were destroyed, that incident would pass away. Was that what the right hon. Gentleman meant?

MR. ASQUITH : I said what I meant, and I meant what I said. I did not say what the right hon. Gentleman has attributed to me, nor do I mean it.

SIR J. GORST said, he would quote the right hon. Gentleman's words :—

> "As to that which is in Wales, at any rate, the main source of the revenue of the Church, the tithes, it (the Establishment) means, in contradistinction to every other form of religious Endowment possessed by other religious sects, that, in the last resort, the machinery of the law and the arm of the law will be brought into operation to enforce it."

He challenged the right hon. Gentleman

to say whether it was not a fact, first, that if this Bill were passed tithe would continue to be paid by the persons liable to pay it exactly as it was paid now; secondly, whether the law, if this Bill were passed, would not enforce the payment of tithe as it did at present; and, thirdly, whether the property of all religious bodies was not in the last resort enforced by the machinery and the arm of the law, exactly in the same way that the collection of tithe was enforced?

Mr. ASQUITH said it was enforced, not as a matter of contract, against the will of the person who had claimed.

Sir J. GORST said he would mention a very extraordinary thing which took place in a parish in Essex (Little Maplestead) near which he lived. The tithe was the property of the Seventh-day Baptists. With that tithe they had endowed a chapel only recently removed, and the arm of the law would enforce the payment of the tithe. It would place them on the same level with the Church. The tithe was not the property of the Church; it was the property of a Nonconformist body. Therefore he said that the statement of the Home Secretary that this was a peculiarity of the Establishment was wholly incorrect.

Mr. ASQUITH said this was the case of impropriated tithe bought and paid for.

Sir. J. GORST said that he should think it was more likely to be the grant from some tithe-owner than that they should have purchased it. His objection was that the Bill was one of pure destruction. It destroyed the existing organisation of the Church in Wales without any legitimate excuse, and it left it to a mere matter of chance whether the Welsh Church would be able to invent a fresh organisation. But what business had that House to impose such a task on the Welsh Church? Why should the Church have to sham all their energies to the perfecting of a new organisation? In one respect ihey were making it absolutely impossible for the people of Wales to do this in the position in which they were now. If there was one thing that Churchmen desired it was that they should remain united, and the effect of their scheme would be to disunite the Church body in Wales from the Church body in England. He did not think that by any clause they could prevent that disunion. He did not believe that they could make any amendment on Clause 14 which would have the effect of allowing Churchmen in England and Wales, if they wished it, to remain in a condition of union in which they were now and which the vast majority of Churchmen in both countries earnestly and passionately desired. There was a distinct injustice inflicted on the Welsh Church.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

### STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL, &c.

Lords Message (22nd March) relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision Bills, &c., considered.

Ordered—That a Select Committee of Six Members be appointed to join with the Committee appointed by the Lords (as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of the 22nd March) to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Committee nominated of—Mr. Ambrose, Sir Edward Clarke, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Howell, the Solicitor General, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Ordered—That Three be the quorum.—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)*

### METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT (SAINT PAUL, DEPTFORD) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLIES AND IMPERIAL FEDERATION BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday 15th May read and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, 27th March 1895.*

The House met at Fifteen minutes after Twelve of the clock.

## *MOTION.*

### PROFIT-SHARING.

Mr. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) moved, that it be an Instruction to the Committee on the South Metropolitan Gas Bill that they have power, if they think fit, to insert the following clause:—

> "Subject to the regulations set forth in the first Schedule to this Act, the directors of the company may, at such times as they deem expedient, prepare a scheme for the purpose of enabling persons in the employ of the company and holding ordinary stock to elect a representative or representatives to take part with the directors in the management of the company, and may submit the scheme to a special general meeting of the company duly called with notice of the business to be considered thereat, and the meeting may adopt the scheme either without alteration or with such alterations (not being inconsistent with the said regulations) as the directors may assent to; and the scheme so adopted shall be submitted for the approval of the Board of Trade, and that Board may consider the same, and may either approve the same without alteration, or may suggest any alterations therein not being inconsistent with the said regulations; and if the directors assent to the alterations (if any) so suggested, the Board of Trade may approve the scheme as altered.
>
> The scheme, when approved, shall be published in *The London Gazette*, and shall, from the date of such publication, have, during the period prescribed in the scheme, full force and effect."

He said that this proposal arose out of the Royal Commission on Labour, to the Report of which was attached an admirable Appendix by Mr. George Livesey, the chairman of the South Metropolitan Gas Company, dealing with this subject. He (Mr. Mundella) would not move this Instruction if it imposed any obligation whatever on the gas company. It was not a new departure, because it had already been adopted with great advantage. The Instruction was practically in Mr. Livesey's own words. On February 13, at the annual meeting of the company, Mr. Livesey explained to the shareholders that he was in favour of the clause, and that he should be glad to see it inserted in the Bill, but he was defeated by a majority of one on the board of directors. He knew it would be a satisfaction to Mr. Livesey and several of his co-directors if the clause was inserted in the Bill. If the system of profit-sharing which Mr. Livesey advocated were adopted he (Mr. Mundella) believed it would have the very best possible results when it came into operation.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) suggested that in order to make the instruction more elastic, "insert a clause" should be substituted for "insert the following clause."

Mr. MUNDELLA gladly adopted the suggestion.

On the amended Motion being put from the Chair,

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, he entirely agreed with the spirit which dictated this proposal. He thought they all felt that it might be very desirable to make some provision, even of a tentative character, for the representation of the workmen on the board of directors; and any company which took the initiative in carrying out such a scheme would deserve well of those who desired to promote good social relations between employers and employed. He was not sure whether the Instruction even now might not fetter the discretion of the Committee. He hoped care would be taken to leave the hands of the Committee free.

Mr. BRYCE thought the object aimed at would command approval in every part of the House. He thought there was nothing more desirable than that the principle of profit-sharing should have a fair chance. As to whether the amended Motion would give sufficient scope to the Committee, perhaps Mr. Speaker would favour them with his opinion.

*Mr. SPEAKER said, he was not in a better position to express an opinion on the matter than any other Member of the House. He understood the object to be aimed at was to give the Committee latitude, and, therefore, perhaps, the case would be met by inserting "a clause or clauses."

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that suggestion would give more elasticity.

*Mr. SPEAKER put the Motion to the House in the form suggested.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH suggested that they should leave out of the Instruction all the words after "the management of the company." Then the Instruction would simply be an expression of opinion on the part of the House that the Committee might usefully adopt the principle of the proposal, leaving it to the Committee to carry out the details in whatever way it might be thought desirable. He moved an Amendment to this effect.

Mr. BRYCE pointed out that this clause had already been considered by the company, and he was not quite certain that any change in the direction suggestion would carry the same amount of assent; otherwise, he saw no objection.

Mr. MUNDELLA agreed that the alteration would afford still greater elasticity to the consideration of the scheme, but the clause had received the assent of a number of the directors and shareholders. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not press the Amendment.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, in these circumstances he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment withdrawn, and Instruction agreed to.

### LONDON MUNICIPALITIES BILL.

*Sir C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean), on a point of Order with reference to the Orders of the Day, said that what should have been the first Order of the Day—the Bill of the hon. Member for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex—had disappeared from the Paper. Hearing on Monday that the hon. Member did not intend to go forward with the Bill, he asked the hon. Member whether he would move on Wednesday that the Order be discharged. He understood the hon. Gentleman to say he would. The Motion had been made the previous day (Tuesday) in the usual manner, and he now asked whether the Motion was made by the request of the hon. Member?

*Mr. SPEAKER said, it was done at the express request of the hon. Member. The Motion was placed in the hands of the Clerk, and he put it in the ordinary way from the Chair.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### IRISH LIGHTS BOARD BILL.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said it was not of a political or Party character; it would be correctly described as a purely commercial Bill. The people who desired a change in the constitution of the Irish Lights Board were the commercial classes of Ireland, the traders, merchants, shipping community, and the Chambers of Commerce. They felt that, in the interests of trade, the constitution of the Board ought to be altered. For many years there had been a general demand that a new Board ought to be constructed, which was more in harmony with the advanced condition of commercial affairs at the present time. The present Board consisted of 22 members. Five of them were nominated by the Dublin Corporation; the other 17 were a permanent body, their numbers being maintained from year to year by co-option when a member died or resigned. This majority of the Board was not considered to be a popular or representative body. They were practically an irresponsible body, beyond the reach of public opinion, and impervious to public criticism. The nominees of the Dublin Corporation were powerless to effect any change in their proceedings; the 17 solid "irremovables" were always there, and, having the great majority on the Board, they ruled and maintained affairs according to their wishes. This Board had the dispensation of a considerable amount of money. There had been no change whatever in its constitution, except in the name, since it was created by the Irish Parliament in 1786. The only body represented on the Board was the Dublin Corporation. Belfast, with its great and increasing trade, had no representative; neither had Cork, Waterford, Limerick, Galway, Drogheda, Wexford, nor Londonderry. The time had, therefore, come when some serious attempt ought to be made to make a fundamental change in the constitution of the Board. Even the Dublin Corporation, which had five representatives on the Board, was limited to the selection from members of its own body. It was not allowed by Act of Parliament to go to the Chamber of Commerce in Dublin, and to select a suitable person to be a representative, nor to go to the great shipowners of Dublin and select from among them a representative. The Dublin Corporation was obliged to send as representatives the Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff for the time being, and three Alderman; and, although there might be among the Common Councillors men more suited to act as Commissioners, the Corporation had no power to select them. The Bill, therefore, proposed to alter the Board with the view of making it more representative, and to bring it into accord with the modern requirements of commercial life. The Bill was a very simple one. It proposed to constitute a new Board of 19 Members, the Board of Trade to have power to nominate eight of the number. The other 11 members would be allotted thus—two for Dublin, two for Belfast, one each for Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Sligo, Derry, Wexford, and Drogheda. It might not be a perfect Bill. He did not know that a perfect Bill was ever brought into the House, and he was not sure that a perfect Bill had ever left the House. The proposals of the measure might be inadequate and defective, but whatever objections there might be to them, they could surely be met by Amendments in Committee. He claimed the sympathetic consideration of the President of the Board of Trade, who admitted yesterday, in answer to a question put to him, that the present constitution of the Irish Lights Board was a subject that demanded inquiry. From that admission they surely might infer that the right hon. Gentleman would give his assent to the Second Reading of the Bill.

*SIR A. K. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that as this subject had been discussed at meetings of the Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, he had been asked to second the Bill. He did so because he believed that the principle of the Bill was at any rate to some extent correct, and because he thought the measure made a proper protest against some of the chief features of the existing system. Yesterday the President of the Board of Trade spoke of the zeal and capacity of the members of the Irish Lights Board. He had no personal knowledge of the subject, but he was bound to say they had not been beyond criticism in respect of some matters. The expressions of the right hon. Gentleman had been both denied and doubted. For instance, Mr. Turner, of Londonderry, speaking at the meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce at Plymouth, in September, 1893, spoke of the unsuccessful attempts to secure better lighting on the route followed by the trans-Atlantic steamers, and appealed to the Associated Chambers to help in obtaining better lighting, and bringing about legislation which would amend the constitution of the Irish Lights Board. A defence set up by the Board was, that they had been greatly hampered by the action, or rather inaction of the Board of Trade, and that they had not been able to do as much as they would have done because of difficulties placed in their way by the Board of Trade and the Treasury. There was a singular unanimity of Irish opinion in favour of this Bill. Representations had been made both from the north, south, east, and west, from Belfast, Londonderry, Cork, Limerick, and even from Dublin, which already had some representation on the Board, though he was told that the representation was not satisfactory, and that, on some points, in addition to those mentioned by the mover of the Second Reading, the Dublin Corporation representatives had not received quite the treatment they thought themselves entitled to. In pursuance of these representations, Memorials had been presented to the Board of Trade, and to the Treasury, and so long ago as March, 1894, a Memorial was forwarded from the Associated Chambers of Commerce to the Chief Secretary, which set out the strong expressions of opinion to which he had referred, and which also showed that some of the members of the Board were not quite so regular in their attendance as they might be. A reply was received to the effect that the matter was under consideration. The question was raised again in the House of Commons on June 19th, and the President of the Board of Trade then gave a somewhat similar answer. The subject was, therefore, under consideration for some time, and he hoped that in what appeared to be everybody's business, and consequently nobody's business—at one time it was the business of the Chief Secretary, at another time of the President of the Board of Trade, and at another time of the Treasury—something would at last be done. This was undoubtedly a real Irish grievance. Until 1854 Ireland had its own Lights Board, and managed its own lighting affairs. At that time jurisdiction was transferred to the Board of Trade, and with it £100,000 of accumulated funds, which were available for making the service efficient. He was obliged to confess that, looking at the figures, Ireland had not been treated as liberally as those who had life and property at stake in her seas might reasonably expect her to be. He thought it might fairly be said that the constitution of the Board was one cause of the complaints which were made. He was told that practically the approval of the Lord Lieutenant to appointments to the Board was a mere matter of form, and that existing members of the Board co-opted almost entirely of their own accord. Co-optation was not a principle which in these days completely recommended itself, its adoption was apt to produce a good deal of stagnation and lethargy. The case of Dublin might be quoted for the purpose of showing that the principle of representation in some form was already conceded. The Dublin Members were *ex officio*, but still they did represent the Municipality. Why should Dublin have representation on the Board and other ports, such as Belfast and Cork, be under a comparative disability? Fifty-five per cent. of the Irish shipping was located in Belfast. Belfast had of its own 125,000 tons of shipping; Dublin, 50,000; and Cork, 24,000. If, as the Mover said, they took into account the shipping which frequented the ports, it was possible Cork would be placed very high in the list, showing that they had a differential system of dealing with Municipalities which was wholly at variance with the statistics on which the representation ought to be based. Yesterday, the hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. T. Gibson Bowles) asked whether there was any precedent for elective boards in reference to lighting. There were two distinct precedents—the case of Hull, which had local jurisdiction, and the case of Newcastle.

*MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES remarked that his question related to general lighthouse authorities, such as the Trinity Board or the Northern Lights Commissioners.

*SIR A. K. ROLLIT pointed out that this was a local demand for representation of various localities, and, therefore, the cases of Hull and Newcastle might be taken as precedents. But there were precedents by analogy in the case of Rivers Conservancy Boards and District Fishery Committees. The whole tendency of legislation in modern times had been in the direction of representation. He doubted whether the Bill should be limited entirely to representation of Corporations. He thought there should be some representation of marine interests and of shipowners. He also thought that the owners of cargoes should have some representation on the Board. He was struck by the remarkable fact that on this Board which dealt with the practical matters of seafaring life, on which the safety of life and property at sea depended, there were apparently only two persons of nautical experience, one being a retired Naval Officer, and the other the Harbour Master of Kingstown, unless an ærated water manufacturer could be included in the same category. The other members of the Board consisted of a timber merchant, two bank and railway directors, two land agents, a wine merchant, a distiller, a draper, a telescope maker, a retired grocer, a pair of Peers, a manure manufacturer and the representatives of the Corporation of Dublin. He thought that a Board which had grown by co-option into a body of that character required some little reformation; and he therefore hoped the Bill, which proposed to give a representative character to the Board and to add to it men of local knowledge and experience in nautical matters, would be allowed to go to a Grand Committee or a Select Committee for consideration.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said, he would prefer to see a Lights Board for the whole of the United Kingdom to distribute the money derived from light dues in an equitable manner, in the interest of the shipping community without regard to nationality. It seemed to him that there should either be more money spent on lighting the coasts of the Kingdom, or much smaller light dues levied on shipping; because there was a considerable surplus, over and above what was spent on lights throughout the Kingdom, which went to the Treasury, and it was a hardship on the shipping community to be taxed beyond what was needed to supply their requirements in the way of lights. But his experience in sailing around the coasts was that there were many places where lights were required; and that undesirable state of things should not be when there was money to remedy it. He had frequently applied to the Board of Trade to have dangerous rocks and currents amongst the Orkney and Shetland islands marked by buoys; and had always been told that there was no money available. But that did not appear to be the case. There was money available; and the shipping community had a right to have all their reasonable requirements met first, before any surplus from the light dues was put into the Treasury. This was not a local question, but a national question. It was not desirable to have separate arrangements for separate nationalities; and what he was in favour of was the establishment of a central body to look after the lighting of the coasts of the Kingdom for the benefit of the whole maritime community.

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said, that as one of the representatives of by far the largest shipping port of Ireland, he was glad to put his name on the back of the Bill, though he did not agree with all its details. The constitution of the Irish Lights Board dated from long ago, when the circumstances of shipping were totally different from what they were now; and hostile though he was to the Board, he should say that they had endeavoured to carry out their duties to the best of their ability, but from the nature of their constitution they had not the advantage of that general and local knowledge of maritime affairs which would have enabled them to discharge their functions more effectively and with more benefit to the shipping community of Ireland. Belfast felt very strongly that it had no voice whatever in the management of the lights, or in the placing of the lights on the Irish coast. It felt that all the more because out of the 270,000 tons of shipping registered in Ireland, 155,000 tons were registered from that port, and yet all the endeavours the port had made to get representation on the Irish Lights Board had failed, because the Board was co-opted and not elected. A few years ago there was a vacancy on the Board, and it was suggested to the Board that it should be filled by the Chairman of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners; but the Duke of Abercorn was elected instead. He had the greatest respect for the Duke of Abercorn, but even supposing his Grace had the necessary knowledge of nautical matters, or matters connected with shipping, he very much doubted that his Grace had the time to attend the meetings of the Board. He thought the Board would have done infinitely better if it had filled up vacancies by the co-option of representatives of the various maritime towns of Ireland, instead of merely electing persons whose social position threw a sort of lustre on the Board. The co-opted members of the Board had the whole management of the affairs of the Board in their hands. There were representatives of the Corporation of Dublin on the Board, but they really had nothing to say to the management of the affairs of the Board, and when those little trips and expeditions were taken, they were carefully excluded. In Belfast they had certain local grievances against the Board which he was sure would have been remedied long ago if the Board were a representative body. They had agitated in Belfast to get a light placed at Blackhead, the northern entrance to Belfast Lough. A steamer, called *The Lord Lansdowne*, was wrecked there, simply for want of the light, and other vessels were very much endangered. The only answer they got to their application to the Lights Board was that it was a local matter, and that if there was a light wanted there the Harbour Commissioners should put it up, and when it was pointed out that the Blackhead was outside the jurisdiction of the Harbour Commissioners, the Board then replied that they had no money for the purpose. That showed that Belfast had reason to be dissatisfied with the Board. He was sure that if the port had a representative on the Board, its interests would have been attended to. He did not think the proposal of the Bill that the Board should be elected partly by the Board of Trade, and partly by the Corporations of the maritime towns, was a proposal that would work well. He thought the electors of the Board should be persons connected with shipping, or if the election ought to be entrusted to public bodies, the Harbour Commissioners would be more appropriate bodies for the purpose than the Corporations. But questions of that kind could be considered by the Select Committee, to which the matter would probably be referred, and if the result was the passing of a Bill to give a representative character to the Board of Irish Lights, there was no doubt that the interest of the shipping community would be attended to far better than they had been in the past.

Mr. DUNBAR BARTON (Armagh, Mid) said, he agreed that if the Irish Lights Board had introduced into their body representatives of ports like Belfast and Cork, they would have saved themselves from much of the opposition that was now brought against them. He should not have risen if it had not been for the reflection made on the existing Board by one or two of the speakers, because it was admitted by the President of the Board of Trade the previous day; it had been admitted with great fairness by the Mover of the Bill, and also by the hon. Member, who had just sat down, that this Board discharged its duties efficiently. The hon. Member for Islington was a little bit inconsistent in his criticism. He told them, for instance, that this was a co-optative Board. He believed the hon. Member himself was a member of the Trinity Board, which was also a co-optative Board, and he would therefore say to him: "Physician, heal thyself." He agreed with the hon. Member for Argyllshire (Sir. D. Macfarlane), and he believed it was the true principle that should guide them in this Bill—that there should be uniformity of treatment on this particular matter in the three parts of the United Kingdom. He had very good authority for that, because in the Home Rule Bill it was specially provided that light houses should be excepted from the local legislature, and should be kept under imperial control. The hon. Member for Islington, dealing with the Irish Light Boards, said in effect—

> "Look at the members of this co-optative Board: here are a retired grocer and an ærated water manufacturer."

But the retired grocer and the ærated water manufacturer were the two members appointed by the Dublin Corporation. The ærated water manufacturer was a very eminent citizen, a very capable business man, and a suitable man to be on the Board. Yet the hon. Member for Islington, in this sweeping manner, condemned the Board which put on these good business men. The particular men the hon. Member selected for criticism were the very men it was desired to bring in by this Bill, and they were appointed by the Corporation and not co-opted by the Board. There seemed to be a misunderstanding as to the powers of the Board. It was supposed that the members of the Board could, of their own accord, provide the lights and make the changes that were suggested in the different localities. That was a mistake. The Board in Dublin, before it could undertake any new work, must first get the approval of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, and before it could embark in any new expenditure, it must first get the approval of the Board of Trade. The hon. Member for Belfast had referred to a complaint from that port on a point which was obviously worthy of consideration. But in that particular case Trinity House coincided with the Board in considering that, as the Board was confined to dealing with ocean-travelling ships in the Channel, the matter was one for the Harbour Authorities, and not for the Board. Again, as to the case from Londonderry, the Board had not got the necessary funds to provide a light, it being requisite first to deal with a more urgent claim from the South of Ireland, which was of more importance, because of the trade to America by the South, than was the case of the Northern port. It was only fair that these matters should be explained, because, whatever might be the constitution of the Board, he believed it had discharged its duty with signal success and satisfaction to those who were concerned. He had mentioned the necessity for uniformity of treatment, but if they were to make any change in the constitution of this Board, there was another principle it would be necessary to observe, and that was that taxation and representation should go together. But the two did not go together in the Bill. It was not the ratepayers of the towns who paid the dues, but the shipping community, and if they were to have taxation and representation going together, the shipping community must be represented on these Boards. In a Memorandum issued by the Chamber of Commerce, objection was taken to the constitution of the Board of Commissioners of Northern Lights, and althought that body had upon it representatives of certain large towns and maritime counties, the Memorandum stated that there was absolutely no representation of the shipping interest, which was preferable to corporate representation. He agreed that such places as Cork and Belfast ought to have representation. But on the Irish Lights Board was Mr. Watson, a director of the Cork Steam Packet Company, who was also an engineer. Surely he was a fit person to be on a nautical board of this kind. Then, again, for dealing with the lenses of these lighthouses, surely a telescope-maker was a most useful member. Sir Howard Grubb was a most distinguished man; and, on all these questions of lenses, there was no one of greater authority. Then among the other members there were Sir Robert Ball, also a great authority on scientific matters, and successful men of business like Mr. Pimm and Mr. Jamieson. They had thus got on the Board gentlemen acquainted with nautical matters, business men, and scientific men, such as Sir Howard Grubb, and he believed that the Board had exercised their co-optative power with great discretion. He did not deny that there were anomalies on the Board, and he agreed that places like Belfast and Cork should be represented, but when they came to deal with this matter they ought to deal with it on two principles, namely—firstly, that there should be uniformity in the treatment of this question in the three parts of the United Kingdom; and, secondly, that taxation and representation should go together, and that the shipping interests who paid the dues should be entitled to adequate representation.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) remarked, that, as regarded the constitution of the Irish Board, he should not presume to say anything. But his hon. Friend who had just spoken had alluded to the constitution of the Scotch Board. The Scotch Board consisted of the Lord Advocate, the Solicitor General, the Provosts of the four large towns of Scotland, and representatives of the maritime counties. But these latter were the Sheriffs, who had nothing directly to do with navigation, and had no authority whatever on the subject. It was, if anything, far too official a board in that respect, and could not be cited as a board having considerable professional or other authority. With regard to what had been said on the subject of uniformity, he did not think the hon. Member for Argyllshire was to be understood as desirous of having one Lighthouse Board for the United Kingdom. They in Scotland, at any rate, had derived great advantage from the fact that they had a board of their own, acquainted with the necessities of lighting on the coast of Scotland. Trinity House did the same in Scotland as it did in Ireland. It gave a preference to the southern over the northern route. What they in Scotland had urged through the Commissioners of Northern Lights for many years was, that there should be better lighting of the N.E., N., and N.W. coasts of Scotland, not with special reference to any port, but with the view of lighting the coasts better, to assist in the development of the northern route from America to the north of Scotland and England, and to German and other northern European countries. They continually found, when they made these recommendations, the declaration that the Trinity House could not sanction the expenditure. He instanced the case of Rattray Head, a lighthouse which the Commissioners had constantly urged on the consideration of the Trinity House. For many years, also, they had been urging the claims of

Flamneel Island and the East Skerries on the East Coast, and only within the last few days, in answer to the hon. Member for Ross, the President of the Board of Trade said that Trinity House had declined to sanction the request.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, that his answer was that it was a long time since the correspondence as to this particular lighthouse.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN trusted that if there was to be an inquiry this power vested in the Trinity House would be investigated, which, considering the enormous value of their shipping, what they wanted was not less but more money spent on lighthouses. As to the contrast between Ireland and Scotland, he did not understand the argument of the hon. Member for Islington. Scotland contributed more than Ireland, and received less from the fund, but he confessed this was not a question of rivalry. They wanted the interests of navigation considered; they wanted more money to be spent on lighting, and with respect to that he thought they might build their lighthouses cheaper than at present. Their lighthouses cost more than lighthouses cost in America or in any part of the world. He did hope that this subject, having been ventilated in that House, they should have a full inquiry into it. He could assure the President of the Board of Trade there was a strong feeling in Scotland on the subject. They felt that they did not get their interests fairly attended to by the Board of Trade and that that northern portion especially did not receive justice.

*MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) joined in pressing that this subject should be submitted to a Select Committee of the House. The last Committee which sat on it was in 1844—50 years ago, and since then the Board of Trade had, he might say, come into existence, and had been invested with large and remarkable powers. Undoubtedly the time had come for submitting the whole matter to a Select Committee. The inquiry in 1844 was undoubtedly complete and exhaustive—there were about 1,000 pages of it—but there was now a different state of things from what existed at that time. Neither that Bill or any other Bill could be satisfactory until that inquiry was made. The hon. Member opposite said there was not enough money. That was not the case. The ships and seamen contributed over £500,000 every year. That was put into a general fund. What happened was this. About £100,000 was embezzled for other purposes. Of course he did not use that word offensively, for the right hon. Gentleman was allowed by Act of Parliament to exercise his own discretion. He should have a few remarks to make on the exercise of that discretion at the proper time. There was ample money, but of this large sum £100,000 was taken by the Board of Trade, which applied it to official purposes, superannuations, pensions, and such like. He said that the whole of it should be applied to lighthouses and lightships, or if there was a surplus it should go towards the diminution of light dues, but he believed that this £500,000 was not too much. He knew personally how straitened the Trinity Board were for money, because the Board of Trade would not allocate sufficient funds. He had applied for a light on the eastern side of the Wash, and the only argument was, that the Trinity Board had not money enough. The Member for Argyllshire had said that one Board should manage the whole of the Kingdom, and it was to be presumed he would establish a Government Department. He did not agree with that. He thought three separate Boards better. He thought local knowledge came in here. He did not mean merely with regard to lights—for these bodies were not supposed to be seamen—they managed the men who manage the lights—he meant the power of dealing with local persons, conducting local business in local ways. An English Board might not manage the business to the satisfaction of Scotchmen or Irishmen, and *vice versa.* The real defect which lay at the root of it was that although there were three Boards, they were all bound hand and foot and placed in the hands of one "Board," whose name was the President of the Board of Trade, for, of course, there was no other Board of Trade than the President himself. They had too much of one Board already, and what he wanted was less of it. He was loth to interfere in an Irish

Debate, unless when he could go into the Lobby with his Irish Friends. But it was most important, in the interests of commerce generally, that the Irish lights should be properly maintained. They were told, as an argument for this Bill, that the constitution of this Board was an anomaly. What the wickedness of being an anomaly was he did not know, but there were many anomalies in this world, and there were not a few that worked extremely well. This Board had worked well, and the only question he recognised as having a practical bearing was—Were their lights properly maintained, and did the Board do the business for which they existed? No hon. Member who had supported this Bill had ventured to reply to that question in the negative, and no one who had any knowledge of the lights on the Irish coast could answer it in the negative. On the whole, their service was extremely well done, and what answer was it to that to say that the Board was an anomaly? He did not care how the Commissioners were composed so long as they did their work well. If the Board did not do all it should, it was the fault of the Board of Trade. The fault lay in the fact that it was deprived of sufficient power and money by the Board of Trade, and he did not think any reconstitution of this Board of Lights, even if they got an absolutely ideal Board in Dublin composed entirely of Irish archangels, would work well so long as it was kept financially, and, as to all its actions, under the control of the Board of Trade. The Bill proposed to give the Board of Trade the power to nominate eight members to this Board. The Board of Trade ought not to be encouraged in this way. It had got far too much restraint on Lighthouse authorities already. The present Board had done their duty admirably, and if they had in any degree fallen short of the full performance of their whole duty it was entirely due to their being placed too much under the English Board of Trade and being deprived of the proper quota of money contributed by shipping for lights. He thought the better way of getting the whole system of lights in proper order was not that this Bill should be passed, but that the President of the Board of Trade should agree to refer the whole subject to a Select Committee of this House.

*Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said, that in a discussion of this kind the fact ought not to be overlooked that this was an Irish question, and, therefore, ought not to be overloaded with English and Scotch issues. The number of questions asked recently in the House in regard to the action, or inaction, of the Irish Lights Board had exceeded the number which had been asked of any Governmental Department in the three Kingdoms. That was a fair proof that complaints had arisen respecting the administration of this Board. As a member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, moreover, he was aware that many complaints had been made to that body in regard to the want of efficiency on the Board. Lights had been asked for at various places on the coast, and no doubt one reason why they had been refused was the want of capital, expenditure that ought to be provided by the united action of the Trinity Board and the Board of Works. Still, the Lights Board might have done many things for the benefit of Irish commerce which it had omitted to do. The administration of the Irish Lights Board was very different in many details from that of the Trinity Board, especially in regard to the nautical department and the system of apprenticeship, and, if he was correctly informed, the Irish Lights Board actually had not, at the present moment, in their possession an official chart of buoys around the Irish coast. It appeared to him that that was one of the most important requirements of the Board. But the more important question at issue was not the administration, but the constitution of the Lights Board. Members were mainly non-elected and were co-opted, and they exercised authority without responsibility. The members of the Dublin Corporation were the only elected portion of the Board, and they were cleverly shut out by manœuvres common on Irish Boards from any share in the administration, and the consequence was that the Board was managed by three or four irresponsible individuals who could not be brought under the influence of public opinion. The commercial community were not adequately represented on the Board, and he agreed with the hon. Member for Mid Armagh that those who paid the dues should have a larger representation upon it. The question of the reconstitution of the Irish Lights Board had been before the House for the last 20 years, but, like many other Irish matters, it had been shunted aside from time to time for other matters which were supposed to demand more consideration. The matter had now arrived at a stage, however, when it had become absolutely necessary, in deference to public opinion, that the Board should be reconstituted, and, as the President of the Board of Trade had himself admitted that the existing constitution of the Board was anomalous, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would assent to the Second Reading of the Bill, and then refer it to a Select Committee. If the right hon. Gentleman did not support the Bill, he should strongly urge the Mover of it to press the matter to a Division. Why English and Scotch Members should intervene in the discussion of a purely Irish matter concerning the administration of the Irish Lights Board, and endeavour to tack on larger Imperial questions upon it, thus making a settlement of the question more difficult, he could not understand.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Brixton) said, that notwithstanding the concluding remark of the hon. Member who had just spoken, he desired, as an English Member, to make a few remarks on the Bill. His justification for doing so was that the question involved went a good deal beyond the scope of this Bill. The whole question of lights at sea had become one of such wide-reaching importance that it was impossible to deal with it partially. He granted that there was need for great improvement in regard to the lights on our coasts, and foreign countries could set them an example in this respect. The coast of France was infinitely better lighted than many parts of the coast of England and Ireland. But, above all things, a system of uniformity was necessary in the lights along the coasts. For that reason he wished to say a few words in opposition to the Bill. In the first place, he thought the Bill was unnecessary. There was no absolute urgency for it, especially as the President of the Board of Trade had admitted that the Irish Lights Board, as at present constituted, had carried out their duties with zeal and capacity. He disagreed with the Mover of the Bill in regard to the way in which the Members of the Board were to be appointed; for in his opinion the selection of members by Corporations of cities was not a good way of forming a Lights Board. As to the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, the President of the Board of Trade stated on the previous day that he did not think the Measure would form a good basis for inquiry by such a Committee. Moreover, at the present time, a Committee of the House was dealing with the whole question, and surely the present Bill should be deferred until that Committee had reported. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would not support its Second Reading, and he moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

*MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) seconded the Amendment.

MR. T. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, the House could not fail to observe that the rejection of the Bill had been moved by a noble Lord who had no connection with Ireland, and also that the only Irish Member who had opposed the Measure was the hon. and learned Member for Mid Armagh, who represented an inland town, and who appeared to be the standing counsel in the House for all anomalies and lost causes in Ireland. The Bill was one of those minor reforms for which Irish Members had struggled unavailingly for more than 20 years, and looking to the policy of both Parties in the House in regard to Ireland, he should have thought the Bill would be accepted as a matter of course. Hon. Members of the Unionist Party, while they denied the claim of Ireland to Home Rule, had vehemently proclaimed on public platforms their readiness to concede to her reforms of a minor character, and to allow the public opinion of Ireland to be efficaciously applied to all departments of administration, and, therefore, they might have been expected to support the Bill. Then, as to the Liberal Party, as their main policy and the reason of the continued existence of the Government were that they were willing to give to the people of Ireland control over those affairs in which Irishmen were principally concerned, it might be supposed that they would have welcomed the Bill, and that the President of the Board of Trade would have regarded it in the light of a boon. There was no department of administration which had been subject to such repeated, continual, and angry interrogations as the Irish Lights Board, and he should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would have welcomed any Bill which afforded an opportunity of placing this Board on a representative basis. The Debate had travelled somewhat wide of the mark. The object of the Bill was limited and specific. As to whether an inquiry ought not to take place, not only into the constitution of the Irish Lights Board, but also into the whole question connected with lighthouses and lights, he could only say he was not willing that any such inquiry should be planted on this Bill. The Bill being for a limited purpose, its promoters had a right to the judgment of the House upon that limited purpose. If there was a grievance in England or in Scotland, let hon. Members ballot and bring in a Bill for their own grievance. It was quite true there was a reservation in the Home Rule Bill that legislation upon trade and lighthouses should be an Imperial function, and it was in the spirit and letter of that reservation that they applied to the Imperial Legislature to correct the existing anomalies. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of uniformity of treatment, but there was this vital difference between the three Boards charged with the management of lighthouses, that while the British Boards, the Trinity House, and the Commissioners of Northern Lights, were responsible to British opinion and sensitive to its working, the Irish Board was not responsible to Irish opinion, and disregarded and felt contempt for Irish opinion; and if, after 20 years of labour in this House on the part of Irish representatives, the House refused to read this Bill a second time, the Irish Board would be properly confirmed in their view that Irish opinion was to be despised. When he looked to the *personnel* of the Board, and, having been for two years an *ex officio* member, he knew nearly all the gentlemen, he failed to see in what sense they could be regarded as more representative of the payers of light dues than any other class of citizens would be. But he took issue upon the principle. The light dues increased the freights, freights increased the price. The merchant or retailer who bought the goods when delivered from the ship added the freight and the light dues to the price. The consumer paid the increased price, and therefore it was not the persons who nominally paid the light dues, the shipper or consigner, who provided the funds, but the community; and therefore, in committing the election of this Board into the hands of bodies elected by the community, they would in a very real sense give the control to those who supplied the funds. On the present Board there were five gentlemen elected by the Corporation of Dublin, but they were a helpless minority in a Board of 22. He asked the President of the Board of Trade was it tolerable at this time of day that the administration of funds raised by a levy on the public and expended for public purposes so important as the facility of commerce and shipping, and even safety of life, should be confided to a body constituted and perpetuated in the manner of a social club, for perpetual co-optation was nothing more. The weak defence was made that the Board worked very well. To that he replied, in the first place, that the staff of experts under the Board did the work, and, in the next, that it would be impossible in a country like Ireland, where the level of intelligence was tolerably high, to secure, even in the exercise of vicious principle, a thoroughly stupid Board. The Board was a political Corporation. The members co-opted Unionists. They would not co-opt a Roman Catholic unless he was a Unionist: and if one looked through the list of names he would find that every gentleman on the Board, except a couple returned by the Corporation of Dublin, was a member of the Unionist Party. That objection, no doubt, did not affect the question of their efficiency, but it affected administration and patronage. The Board had contracts to make and appointments to give. So far as his experience went, no one who was either a Catholic or a Nationalist need ever hope for an appointment. Such a condition of things was a stigma and an offence and ought to be removed. He submitted that the proposal of the hon. Member for Wicklow was one very suited to the necessities of the case. The President of the Board of Trade might be willing to consider whether the Board of Trade should nominate a large or smaller portion of the Board, and if the Municipal Corporations in the maritime counties were not the most suitable bodies, then in the Schedule attached to the Bill other bodies might be named by way of substitution or addition. Considering that a general inquiry was in progress, which might bear on the subject dealt with by the Bill—though he supposed it would rather be directed to the system of lights and the question of funds rather than the constitution of the authorities—it was very unlikely that the Report of the Commission would concern itself with the constitution of the Irish Lights Board. But even admitting theoretically the possibility that the Report of the Commission might touch on the subject of the constitution of the Board, he should advise his hon. Friend, in case the Second Reading was granted, to agree to postpone the nomination of the Select Committee for a reasonable time, to allow for the receipt of the Report on the Mercantile Marine Fund. Considering the length of time that the grievance had existed, and that they had been agitating against it, and that they had in power a Government friendly to Irish claims, and the irritation that the irresponsible character of the Board as at present constituted caused throughout the country, he did not think his hon. Friend would be justified in casting discredit on his own principle by assenting to the withdrawal of the Bill. While he thought the judicious offer to consider the propriety of waiting for the Report before appointing the Select Committee would be accepted, it should be on the understanding that the Select Committee should be appointed in time to afford some assurance that it would report before the termination of the Session.

Mr. BRYCE candidly admitted that there had been ample justification for the Introduction of the Bill. There could be no doubt that the constitution of the Irish Lights Board was not satisfactory. It had been admitted for many years past, and had not been seriously disputed by any hon. Member who had taken part in the Debate. While saying that, he admitted that many Members of the Board were competent men, and that their administration of the lighthouses was conducted with zeal and ability. He also conceded that, at first sight, it was absurd that great mercantile and shipping communities like Belfast and Cork should be entirely unrepresented. But when they asked what was to be substituted for the present system of co-optation the matter was difficult. Although a defence could be offered for the other Lighthouse Boards of the country which could not be made for Irish Lights Board they afforded no precedent. Trinity House demanded respect, because of the eminent professional capacity and experience of those who composed it, which shielded it from criticism which might otherwise be passed on its non-co-optative character. The Scotch Board, although no doubt open to criticism, yet was composed of *ex-officio* persons who were directly connected with particular ports of Scotland, and who brought to it local knowledge which was entirely wanting in the Irish Board. Although these English and Scotch Boards did not create a precedent for the representative system in Ireland, they did not support the present Opposition to the Irish Lights Board. But, while no one had defended the Irish Lights Board, no one had defended the provisions of this Bill except the hon. Member for Kerry. All that could be said for the Bill was, that some change in the law was necessary. If a Resolution to that effect were before the House he would vote for it, but he found in this Bill a proposal that the majority of the Board should be elected by the corporations of certain towns in Ireland—Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Drogheda. He could not see the slightest ground for giving all this representation. If permitted at all it should not go beyond Dublin, Belfast, and Cork. But there was nothing to show that these Corporations in any way represented the mercantile and shipping community. The hon. Member for Kerry ingeniously suggested that the consumers were the persons to be considered, and they were represented by the Corporation. But consumers, as consumers, had not the knowledge required. Local knowledge was not necessary in the sense in which local corporations obtained it. The lighting arrangements of a particular harbour were in the jurisdiction of particular harbour authorities. But these lighthouses were not necessarily connected with any particular harbour, but were intended for the shipping of the whole world. The Fastnet and Tuskar Lighthouses, for example, were for the vast mass of shipping which came to the ports of the United Kingdom from America. Nineteen-twentieths of this shipping came to British, and not to Irish, ports. Localities, if represented at all, should be represented in a minor way, to give the appointment of the majority of the Board to corporations representing localities would encourage the latter to make competition to do things for a particular community instead of having regard to the general interests of shipping off the Irish coast. What the composition of the Lights Board ought to be, he was not prepared to say; that was much too large a question to enter upon then. Whatever were the considerations involved, they went to show that Town Councils were not the bodies to be entrusted with their appointment. With the exception of the hon. Member for North Kerry, no one had defended the proposal to give the appointment to municipal corporations. The hon. Member for Belfast said he objected to the nominees of corporations; the hon. Member for Dublin suggested shipowners rather than corporations. These things being so, he could not find the lead basis in the Bill for a satisfactory scheme or arrangement. The unanimity was limited to dissatisfaction with what existed; but there was not the least unanimity as to the remedies proposed. Although the Bill related to Ireland only, it was not possible to separate Ireland altogether from other lighthouse authorities of the United Kingdom. For the sake of expressing dissatisfaction it was not necessary to give a Second Reading to the Bill; and it was not desirable, because it would be committing the House in a way in which it ought not to be committed with regard to a substitute, whether for Ireland or any other part of the United Kingdom. The Bill was only distributed the day before yesterday, and it was a little hard on Irish light-payers, and on Ireland altogether, that the House should be asked to read it a second time before there had been time for it to be considered in Ireland. Bills of this kind ought to be distributed a little longer before the Second Reading, in order that there might be time to elicit opinion in Ireland.

*MR. T. SEXTON said, that on two recent Wednesdays the House had given a Second Reading to two Bills which had been distributed only a day or two before—one relating to the Municipal Franchise and the other to the constitution of Boards of Guardians.

MR. BRYCE said, he was not prepared to assent to the proposition that because the House sometimes did a thing, therefore it was always to do it. So far as he knew, this was the first Bill on the subject, whereas the other topics named had often been before the House previously. It had been argued that there ought to be but one Lighthouse authority for the United Kingdom, and there was a good deal to be said for that view. The position of the Board of the Trade did not seem to be accurately known. The Board had to administer a limited fund upon which there were other charges besides those for lighthouses; it was not in its power to get rid of the other charges; and it did its best, with the advice of the Scotch and Irish Boards and of Trinity House, to make the available money go as far as possible. The Board had given the best proof of its wishes by appointing a Committee, presided over by the right hon. Member for Bodmin, to deal with the whole question of the Mercantile Marine Fund, to see whether anything could be done to supply the painful lack of pence under which the Board suffered, and to report whether there could be a re-arrangement by which greater satisfaction could be given to shipowners and more money set apart for the provision of lights. It was possible that the Report of the Committee might have material bearing upon the constitution of Lighthouse authorities. He did not desire that the House should have to reject the Bill, seeing that it was brought forward with the best intention to remedy a long-standing grievance; and he hoped the House would be relieved from the necessity of voting by the Second Reading being postponed or by the Bill being withdrawn. Further, agreeing to the fullest extent with the indefensibility of the present system, and that the matter deserved and ought to receive immediate inquiry, he was prepared to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the whole subject of the constitution of Lighthouse authorities to report as soon as it could, though not without waiting for the Report of the Committee on the Mercantile Marine Fund. He hoped hon. Members from Ireland would regard this offer as a substantial advance. The matter would not be relegated to the limbo of good intentions. The House would commit itself to the declaration that this was an important matter deserving the attention of Parliament; inquiry would accelerate legislation; and he, therefore, trusted that the House would not be put to the trouble of a Division.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, there was one observation of the right hon. Gentleman with which he wished to associate himself, and that was his protest against the common practice, by no means confined to Irish Members, of introducing Bills on the first days of the Session, obtaining places for them, and not printing them until a day or two before they came on. There was a Bill on the Paper that day, relating to English land tenure, and proposing to introduce the Irish system into England; it was not circulated until yesterday; and there were other Bills as to which similar complaint might be made. Such a Bill as this, which simply proposed to substitute the elective for the co-optative principle in the formation of the Board of Irish Lights, was less open to objection on the score of late publication than more complicated Measures. As to the rejection of the Bill being moved by an Englishman, it was a matter of Imperial concern; and it would not be practicable to include Irish lights in a Home Rule scheme. Having personally, when President of the Board of Trade, taken great interest in the administration of the three Lighthouse Boards of the United Kingdom, and having visited a large number of lights himself, he could not accept the view of the right hon. Gentleman, that the constitution of the Irish Lights Board was indefensible, that it was not compatible with modern ideas, and that it did not come before them with anything in its favour. He entirely demurred to the favourite view of hon. Members opposite that nothing could be well administered which was not administered by a representative body. Surely the most important test to be applied to any body was whether it had done its work well or not.

MR. BRYCE said he did not intend to commit himself to so large a proposition. All he said was, that the Irish Lights Board had not the advantage of special technical knowledge any more than it had a locally representative character. The Trinity House, although not representative, had the advantage of great professional knowledge and experience, and justified itself on that ground.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH contended that men like Mr. Watson, Sir Robert Ball, and other members of the Board were as well qualified to administer matters of this kind as any men in the United Kingdom. If the objection taken to the constitution of the Board was worth anything, surely it would apply with much greater force to the constitution of the Scotch Board, which was purely a legal Board, composed of the law officers of the Crown, the sheriffs of certain counties, and a few provosts, who, he believed, never attended. No greater anomaly could be conceived, yet he ventured to say that no lights in the world were so well looked after as those round the Scotch coast. The most important consideration in this question was, that the service should be well conducted, and he was perfectly certain that the right hon. Gentleman would find it a most difficult task to constitute a Board which would carry on this service better than the present Board, whatever might be the anomalies of its constitution. He did not want to enter into the financial part of the subject. That was in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin and his colleagues. If the Board had not had sufficient funds, it was not their fault nor the fault of the Board of Trade. It was the fault of Parliament. Owing to the requirements of existing Statutes, a considerable portion of the sum levied annually as light dues was expended for other purposes not connected with lights, and if any proposal were made to relieve the light dues of that expenditure he did not think much objection would be raised. He thought his hon. Friend the Member for Belfast was right in blaming the Board for declining to co-opt some gentleman representing the commercial and shipping interests of Belfast. He regretted that they should have so exercised their power of Co-optation as to exclude a representative of that City; but that was a very different thing from the proposal in this Bill, which started with the assumption that the Corporations of certain towns in Ireland were the best authorities to choose representatives of the commercial and shipping interests of the country. If there was to be a system of representation at all—and he did not deny that some representation might be advisable—it ought to be something more analogous to the manner in which local Marine Boards were appointed. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, had objected, and, he thought, rightly objected, to the adoption by the House of the principle of representation proposed by this Bill, and proposed that the whole subject should be considered by a Select Committee. He did not quite understand whether the right hon. Gentleman intended that such a Committee should consider the Constitution of Trinity House, and of the Scotch Lights Board as well.

Mr. BRYCE: I intended that it should deal with the Irish Board primarily. All that I have before my mind at present is the desire to confine the work of the Committee to the question of the constitution of the Irish Lights Boards.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, he would not press the right hon. Gentleman any further, but he would like to say, as regarded Trinity House, that he believed it would be absolutely impossible for any Committee to constitute a Board more thoroughly qualified to administer the Light Service in England than the Trinity House Board. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, in framing the Reference to the Committee, would be very careful so to frame it as not to interfere with the work of the Departmental Committee which was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin. The right hon. Gentleman admitted, in the course of his observations, that this subject of the constitution of Lights Boards must necessarily be, to a great extent, mixed up with those financial questions which were the principal subject of inquiry by the Committee of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin. He thought it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to dissociate the two subjects, and he very much regretted that the House had not had the advantage of some observations from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin upon the proposals in the Bill, and he hoped they might hear his views now on the suggestion of the President of the Board of Trade. He would be very sorry to raise any objection to the appointment of a Committee, but two inquiries on the same subject, conducted by different people, and going on at the same time, were not likely to lead to any practical or useful results, and he trusted that whatever might be done in this matter, it would be something that would bring things to a practical issue, and make such changes as might be fair and right in the constitution of the Irish Lights Board without unfitting it for the task entrusted to it, or casting the smallest reflection on those individuals who had so admirably performed their duties.

Mr. LEONARD COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, his observations would be very few, because he had no authority from the Committee over which he presided to speak on the special question before the House. The reference to that Committee was to inquire into the financial conditions of the Boards of the three countries, and the question whether any change in the composition of the Local Board in Ireland was desirable did not directly come within that reference. Of course they had to consider not only the sources from which the Mercantile Marine Fund was taken, but also the way in which the Fund was spent, and the question whether there might not be some scope for economy in the substitution of one Board for three. The Committee had strictly confined their attention to the question whether any change in the composition of the Boards or a union of the Boards would lead to any more economical arrangement of the Mercantile Marine Fund. He thought it was highly probable that the Committee would be led by their inquiry to suggest that it might be of advantage to substitute an inquiry such as that suggested by the President of the Board of Trade. He was bound to say that the proposal of the Board had not been received with general approbation; nor did he think it at all a practical suggestion, for, if it were adopted, it would still be necessary to have subsidiary boards in different parts of the kingdom, and the conditions under which they would work in relation to the Board of Trade would also have to be considered. He respectfully suggested that this question should be investigated by a Committee, and he should strongly support the suggestion of his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade. Therefore he hoped the hon. Member in charge of the Bill would withdraw it. No doubt the Irish Board itself might be dealt with, but they would also be driven to the consideration of the still more anomalous condition of the Scotch Board, and they might have to consider the constitution of Trinity House. These things being necessarily bound up together, was there any advantage in pressing forward the Second Reading of the Bill, even if it were not open to the criticisms to which it was exposed. The hon. Member for Islington had only committed himself in the vaguest way to any approval of the proposals for the election of 11 Commissioners to represent maritime cities, and even the hon. Member for North Kerry had admitted that these proposals were open to criticism. That was not a conclusive recommendation of the Measure to the House.

Mr. SEXTON explained that what he had said was, that it was evident that the details of the proposals in the Bill must in a measure depend upon the conclusions of the Committee.

Mr. COURTNEY remarked that there were only two substantial proposals in the Bill, one being that a portion of the new Irish Lights Board should be nominated by the Board of Trade, and the other, that the Maritime Corporations should nominate the remaining portion. The hon. Member for Kerry was apparently prepared to abandon the proposal for the nomination of Commissioners by the Corporations. Surely, in the circumstances, it would be better not to proceed with the Bill, but to remit the whole subject to a Select Committee for inquiry. He trusted that the Bill would be withdrawn, the opposition to it being, of course, withdrawn first.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) pointed out that the first clause of the Bill provided that the first election of Commissioners to represent maritime cities should take place in January 1896, that the second clause provided that the Commissioners appointed by the Board of Trade should hold office from January 1, 1896, and should act with the persons elected under Clause 1, and that the third clause provided that on December 31 1895, the present Commissioners should cease to hold office. The results of these provisions would not improbably be that for a time, at the beginning of next year, there would be no Board at all. It struck him that there was much truth in the remark which had been made that this was a very Irish Bill.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) wished to explain why he could not vote with his hon. colleague on this occasion. The hon. Member opposite, he thought, admitted that it was not reasonable or advisable to refer great questions relating to the navigation at sea to a body of gentlemen who might have no knowledge of the subject. [Mr. Sexton: "I never said so."] But there was obviously need for a reform of the present Board. The proposal in the Bill was, that the majority of the new Board should be elected by persons who were themselves elected, and had no necessary connection with the sea. It was possible, therefore, that the 11 persons elected by the Corporations would not be elected on account of any special maritime knowledge, and so, on a Board of 21 members there might be a perpetual majority unacquainted with what, after all, was the real business of the Board. His hon. colleague had correctly expressed the views of the Harbour Board and Corporation of Belfast, that there was need for a reconstruction of the Irish Lights Board, but after the offers that had been made by the President of the Board of Trade to refer the whole subject to a Committee, he could not give his vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. He believed that he should be representing the views of all those who were really concerned in the navigation of ships in Irish waters, as well as of the Harbour Board of Belfast, if he asked that a material portion of this measure—namely, the portion relating to the election of members of the Lights Board by Maritime Corporations, might be reconsidered.

MR. J. ROSS (Londonderry City) explained that he had come down to the House with the intention of supporting this Bill, for, without doubt, his constituents were anxious that some change should be effected in the constitution of the Irish Lights Board, which was at present unsatisfactory. But he could not shut his eyes to the fact that a most reasonable offer had been made by the Government, and he thought it would be exceedingly unwise to reject that offer. The proposal that the whole subject should be referred to a Select Committee was a thoroughly sensible and practical offer, and, in the circumstances, he should not vote for the Second Reading of the Bill.

The House divided:—Ayes, 76; Noes, 193.—(Division List No. 35.)

## FARM SERVANTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn) rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill. He congratulated the House and the Scottish people on the fact that such an early opportunity had been more or less unexpectedly presented of bringing forward the question of the state of the Housing of Scottish Farm Servants. This was not only an old but a thoroughly admitted grievance. It had been endured by the farm servants of Scotland for the last 50 years. The Scottish farm servant was an intelligent man, but he was also a very law-abiding man, who bore mutely, to a very great extent, sufferings, which in the case of men of a different stamp would have caused them to band together, and make a great deal more ado. A law-abiding, long-suffering class like this ought, however, specially to commend itself to the consideration of the House. It had been said in certain papers, and perhaps would be said by some Members of the House, that the grievances of farm servants in regard to their dwellings had been dealt with by recent enactments. They were referred to the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, and it was alleged that that Act either provided, or was intended to provide, a means of remedying these grievances. In the first place it would not be said in any part of the House that the grievances had been redressed. Whether the Act ought to have redressed them, was, of course, a very different matter. The only sections of the Act which had any possible bearing upon the question were Sections 30 and 31, dealing with buildings unfit for human habitation. The first of these sections prescribed that it was the duty of the Medical Officer of Health of every district to represent to the local authority of the district any dwelling house which appeared to be in a state so dangerous or so injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation. The next section went on to provide the means whereby complaints might be made, so as to put the Medical Officer of Health in motion. If it was held that these sections remedied the grievances of the Scottish farm servants, it would come to this, that a farm servant was to be held as not possessing any grievance unless he was living in a house which was actually so dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation. It was a terrible thing to declare that a large section of the most industrious class of the community should be unprotected with regard to their housing by any legislative enactment, so long as it could be held that their houses were not absolutely so dangerous as to be unfit for human habitation. So that even if it had been found that the Medical Officer had been put in motion, the reference to him and the obligations laid upon him under the Act were not of a character properly to provide a remedy for the present condition of the houses of the Scottish farm servants. But, even supposing suitable cases were brought forward, the Act of 1890 only provided that the Medical Officer of Health should apply to the proper authority, and the proper authority, on his report, would make a closing order. It was perfectly obvious that this was a section which might be very applicable to towns, but it could have no possible application to sparsely-peopled rural districts. What would be the earthly use of attempting to put in motion a machinery which resulted merely in a closing order? Supposing such an order was issued for the closing of a great many of the bothies, and even of the married quarters in which farm servants lived, where would the people go when the wretched shanties in which they lived were closed. You might as well close the farms, because the farm servants would absolutely have nowhere else to go. So far as he read the Act it did not provide any power to compel either the landlord or anyone else to repair a farm servant's dwelling. For these reasons he did not think it would be contended that his Bill was unnecessary. The Bill provided, not only that a house must not be dangerous for human habitation, but that it should be provided with sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of cubic contents, according to the number of people living in it. He was not aware that any officer of health under the Act of 1890 would be justified in saying that he would apply his closing order to a bothy, however small, and were the cubic contents allowed to each person ever so insufficient. The Bill also provided that there should be, where necessary, fireplaces. Then there was the question of accommodation for each sex, which was a most important question, and almost lay at the root of country life in Scotland. The amount of illegitimacy in Scotland, especially in the sparsely-populated districts, was largely caused by the insufficient separation of the sexes in these country shanties. The leading operative provision of the Bill was Clause 6, which said :—

> "If any person, with the written consent of two householders living in the district in which any building used or intended to be used as a dwelling or sleeping place for farm servants is situated, complains in writing to the medical officer of health of that district that such building is in a condition which does not conform to the requirements of this Act and of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, he shall within eight days after receiving the complaint inspect the same and transmit to the local authority the said complaint, together with his opinion thereon, and, if he is of opinion that the building is in the condition aforesaid, he shall represent the same to the local authority."

He was curious to know if the hon. Member for Forfarshire, whom he saw in his place, had won his great, and, no doubt, well-deserved success at the polls at the last election, and had at the same time escaped from giving any pledges during the contest that he would do what he could to remedy the grievous state of the farm servants' cottages in his own constituency. He would refer him to a case which was tried in Forfar two or three years ago. It was a case where two farm servants were sued for deserting their employment, and the reason which they gave, and which was not disputed, was that the bothy was unfit for human habitation. There were no beds to lie upon, the floor was composed of protruding stones, while the rain ran down the inside of the walls and the stars could be seen through the roof at night as they lay upon the floor. With the permission of the House he would quote a few passages on this subject from the articles written by the Special Commissioner of a northern newspaper, who, about three years ago, reported on the state of farm servants' houses in Scotland. An inmate of one these places said to him :—

> "When the lads live in the kitchen they must get some attention, but the bothy just looks after itself. You would never gainsay this if you saw one."

SIR H. MAXWELL: Will the hon. Member say what part of Scotland he refers to?

*MR. KEAY said this passage referred to Aberdeenshire. The Special Commissioner went on to describe the place :—

> "A glance may be taken at what, for the sake of euphony, may be called the interior economy of a bothy—the exterior, as a rule, may speak for itself, being simply a rough view of a shed, standing somewhere near the confines of the steading. Throw open the door and you will find yourself in a long, low apartment, panelled round with box-beds, and having for chief furniture the 'kists' of the inmates, a deal table, and a paraffin lamp. Here the men live, and move, and have what is called their being. At five o'clock all hands turn out on the cold floor, and, having hastily dressed, proceed to 'meat' their horses and clean the stable. Half-an-hour afterwards they return to the bothy for breakfast. One of their number having been dispatched a quarter of an hour previously to boil the kettle, everything is ready for breakfast—that is to say the kettle. To make porridge would be a culpable waste of time; so each man, seizing upon his wooden cup—*Scottice*, "luggie"—throws in about three spoonfuls of meal, and upon that, boiling water at discretion. At eleven o'clock comes 'lowsin' time, and at midday dinner—brose again. Then, when the shades of evening begin to fall, or at six o'clock in summer, the ploughman homeward plods his weary way to bothy and brose once more, when down he flings himself on his 'kist,' and waits the boiling of the kettle, for even brose require some making."

When asked about the cleaning of the bothies one of the men replied :—

"There's a lassie comes from the farm house once or twice a-week to clean the bothy. I've known her come three times, but that's something extraordinary."

With regard to the bothies in Forfarshire, he would give the following quotation on the responsibility of the editor of a newspaper called the *Plough* :—

"The young men are herded in these hovels in numbers of from two to a dozen. Now, a bothy is famous neither for expensive furnishings nor for bodily comfort. No one in passing a farm will mistake a bothy. It has an appearance all its own. Some bothies have a heap of ashes at the door, others will be known by a window with a straw or paper pane for glass, while others will be known by the primitive means of access allowed to the light of day. No man who saw a bothy can ever mistake one for a more humane habitation. Inside it does not improve ; a broken floor, uneven and dirty, the only thing in the shape of furniture being a few rough-looking beds, along with a wooden form, the pot, pan, ladle, and salt box. There is nothing about a farm that receives so little attention as the bothy, not even the pigsty."

He would add a few lines from the Report of this same Special Commissioner upon the married quarters as distinguished from the unmarried quarters :—

"I found that my friend shared the general horror that all of his class expressed regarding the houses provided for married men, and many, he told me, rather than live in one of them, went into town when they got married. No one may doubt the truth of this assertion who cares to have a look at some of these 'rickle' houses. Let me describe one in a few words. At the corner of a field by the roadside, if you come across a thatched building of loose rubble, sometimes stove in at one end, and blackened by the weather, with an ugly patch of garden ground showing a few cabbage runts, and a half-dismantled wall in front, the chances are that it is one of the 'cottages' sacred to the family life of the labourer. Enter the low-crowned doorway, and in the dismal "but and ben" you may perhaps make out a few pieces of blackened furniture—a deal table, a few chairs, perhaps a meal girnel, and an old trunk, and one or two "creepies," with little gaping children squat upon their tottering frames. If it is light enough you may discover that the floor is of earth, and the windows of nothing in particular ; that the fire of peat or logs burns on a bare hearth, and that the smoke which fills the room in vain seeks escape by a 'hinging lum.' This elegant contrivance is a sort of long wooden box, with a bowie or half barrel at the top to serve as stalk. The roofs are covered with divots, then thatched, and finally 'raipit,' but still it is far from watertight, as you would find if you were an inmate for a day or two in winter. Altogether it is a most despicable apology for a dwelling-house, and was probably built a couple of hundred years ago. But here the bright young farm hand brings his bride, and year by year they begin to degenerate. At thirty-five she is an old woman. I shall not readily forget one of these places I chanced to enter one evening. A path of mud led to a ricketty door that creaked on a rusty hinge, and when it was opened, it disclosed the family circle huddled round a fire of peat and damp sticks. That was the only light. Father and mother sat glum and stoical, as if every gleam of happiness had gone out of their lives, while the children flopped about on the floor. In the 'ben hoose' an elderly man, bleared and furrowed, bent over a volume of smoke with a half-eaten speldron in his hand."

Mr. COCHRANE : Can the hon. Member give the name of the estate and the family ?

*Mr. KEAY said, he could not. The remedy suggested by the Bill was the very natural one of putting upon the landlord the statutory obligation of keeping these farm servants' houses on farms in repair. [An hon. Member : "Why the landlords ?"] He would tell his hon. friend opposite why the landlord should do it. It might be asked why the farmer should not do it. He would tell the House. Any structure erected by the tenant *ipso facto* became the property of the landlord. It was no matter where the material or the labour came from. He admitted that the stones, and the turf, and the wood might have been the property of the tenant, but he also pointed out that every structure in Scottish law, and he believed in English law as well, erected by the tenant became, as already said, *ipso facto* the property of the landlord. He held, therefore, that the tenant could not be expected to keep these houses in repair, for the obvious reason that whatever money he laid out upon them became an asset of the landlord. And not only that, but the farmer would probably have to pay twice over, that is to say he would not only have to build and keep these houses in repair, but his rent would very probably be raised on him in consequence of the improvements which he had effected. It was only equitable, therefore, that the landlord, who was the proprietor and who received the rent of the holding, should be legally bound to keep the houses in a reasonable state of repair and comfort for his toiling men. He knew cases in his own constituency in which large farmers had not only to keep the roofs of their bothies in some kind of repair, but had even to expend large sums in repairing their farm buildings in order not to risk the lives of their stock. And all this was done at the risk of having their rents raised upon them in consequence of their having done so. Living under such circumstances, therefore, it is surely only reasonable that the landlord, and not the tenant, should be made responsible for the provision of healthy dwellings for the agricultural labourers. He need not enter into the details of the Bill, the nature of its sanitary provisions, the method of inspection, the nature of the penalties, and the mode of appeal. These were matters which could be considered or modified, if need be, in Committee. He would only now appeal to the House to pass the Second Reading of the Bill unanimously, and thereby to assert the principle, which he thought would be assented to by both sides of the House, namely, that the same amount of protection to the health and life of the country toilers should be given as was already possessed by workers in the towns.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire), in seconding, said, that this was a question which had been pressed on his attention in his own constituency, and he thought that the only reason why it had not hitherto been so much considered was because the people affected, though a large and deserving class, were so much scattered that they had not an opportunity of combining and forcing their needs on public notice. The conditions of the Scottish farm labourer were somewhat different from those in England. The hiring of the farm servants in Scotland was for a year, and the hiring was arranged at hiring fairs; so that the farm labourer, when he entered service had no opportunity of seeing the condition in which he would live during his period of service. But having engaged himself, he might go to the farm and find that the accommodation was extremely bad, and yet for a year, or at least for six months, he had no escape from the accommodation without incurring a penalty of some kind. Another difficulty was that there was no hiring agreement for house accommodation, and the servant, therefore, had no remedy. In some cases the tenants had done what they could to improve the servants' accommodation, but they could hardly be expected to do much when the money they expended was lost eventually to them. The landlord, therefore, ought to be looked to in order to make this accommodation good. In many cases the landlords had done their duty in this matter, and they wished to see the law altered so that the careless and indifferent landlords should be compelled by law to do what the good and conscientious landlords already did for their servants.

*Mr. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.) moved the following Amendment:—

> "That this House, whilst recognising the desirableness of amending and rendering more effective The Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867, considers it undesirable to legislate on this subject without conferring the benefits equally on all classes of the community."

He said that he had listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Elgin and Nairn, and during a residence of nearly 29 years in Scotland he must say that he had never met with any class of buildings of the character described by the hon. Member. Sad as some of those descriptions were, he did not believe that any hon. Member thought that they correctly described to any considerable extent the actual state of affairs with regard to the houses of farm servants, or any other class of the community in Scotland. If, however, it was the case, then the fact reflected very considerable discredit on hon. Members who belonged to the Liberal Party, because they had enjoyed a substantial majority of the Scottish representation for a long time. The hon. Member had referred to the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, and had pointed out the difficulties of bringing those portions of it which bore on the subject now under discussion into practical effect. He held that the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890 was unnecessary in order to provide a remedy for the state of matters which the hon. Member would make the House believe largely prevailed throughout Scotland. In the first place, there was no reason to suppose that any particular class in the community ought to be dealt with differently from other classes of the community.

He could see no reason whatever why, if it could be shown that any houses in Scotland continued in an insanitary condition, some change in the general law of the country should not be made. Its operation would have the effect of remedying any existing defects in the case of houses occupied by the agricultural population or any other class in the community. It seemed to him that the provisions which existed in the Public Health Act of 1867 were, to a large extent, quite sufficient to meet the difficulties of the case, even if they arose in so acute a form as that which had been described by the hon. Gentleman. In the 16th Section of the Act of 1867, with regard to nuisances, very considerable powers were given to the local authorities; there was a provision as to insufficiency of size, defect of structure, ventilation, want of repair, proper drainage, suitable water supply, cesspool arrangements, rendering any inhabited house, building, premises, or part thereof, injurious to the health of the inmates or unfit for human habitation, and constituting a nuisance. Very considerable powers were given, by which local machinery could be set in motion, which would have the effect of compelling anyone who neglected his duty in respect of these matters to respect and obey the law. The Local Government Act of 1894, and the Local Government Act of 1889, had made considerable changes with regard to local powers under the Public Health Act of 1867; and those changes had been in the direction of placing, in the first place, under the Act of 1889, on the District Committee of the County Council, in place of the old Parochial Board, the responsibility of administering the Public Health Act in Scotland. That had made an enormous change in regard to the administration of the Act. He did not think that anyone who had been following the course of administrative work in Scotland could have failed to observe that, since the responsibility of the administration of the Public Health Acts had been devolved on the District Committees of the County Councils, there had been a distinct advance in regard to the manner in which those Acts were administered. They had been more effectively administered, and the Executive had been strengthened by the change. The Act of 1894 provided that the Parish Council would now be able, on any application to it, to apply to the District Committee. The District Committee needed no longer to wait on the application of a certain number of householders; but the Parish Council, on its own initiative, or, if moved, could take action; so that a farm servant in any part of Scotland could appeal to the Parish Council and so set the machinery in motion with regard to defective sanitary accommodation of bothies. If in any part of Scotland such buildings as the hon. Member had described existed, the new Parish Council should be urged, on every occasion that necessity arose, to put in force the full powers they enjoyed, and in that way to secure, as everyone wished to see secured, for all classes of the community, the very best possible accommodation that could be provided. Turning to the Bill itself, it seemed to him the hon. Member had had two things in his mind, the bothy system and the question of ordinary houses occupied by the agricultural population. The provisions of the Bill, however capable of application they might be to one of those classes of occupancy, were probably little capable of application to the other class. The Bill provided that every building on a farm used or intended to be used as a dwelling or sleeping place for farm servants after the passing of this Act, shall be provided with sufficient and suitable accommodation in the way of cubic contents, fireplaces, sanitary arrangements, and fixtures. That seemed to him to be an entire departure from anything yet provided by Legislation with regard to any class of houses. What did the hon. Member mean by fixtures? It might mean anything from a hat peg to a telephone. The Bill went on to provide that—

> "And also where persons of both sexes inhabit, or are intended to inhabit such building, with proper separate accommodation for persons of each sex."

He would like to know what the agricultural population of Scotland had done that in future separate accommodation was to be provided for a man and wife, and that they were no longer to be permitted to live together.

*Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY said there was no such provision in the Bill.

*MR. C. B. RENSHAW said, that that seemed to him the simplest and most natural interpretation of the language of the Bill.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said the provision of the Bill was that where both sexes inhabited a building, separate accommodation for each sex should be provided. There was no compulsion that a man and wife must live in the separate accommodation. Separate accommodation was merely to be provided, and, of course, would be used when propriety demanded.

*MR. RENSHAW understood then that if there were two rooms in a house one was to be labelled "For men," and the other "For women," that one should be the husband's room and the other the wife's. That seemed a very extraordinary provision. Then the Bill went on to provide that the local authority was to have power to make bye-laws in respect of matters contemplated in the section. The Lord Advocate knew very well what difficulty there had been in regard to bye-laws under the Local Government Act of 1889. In this Bill, however, it was proposed to enact that bye-laws were to be made without any limitation whatever, as to what the bye-laws were to be about, or without any general guiding rule as to the fixing of them. It was further proposed that—

> "Where it appears to the Local Authority, on the report of the Medical Officer of Health, that the provisions of this Act are not complied with in the case of any building, the Local Authority shall by written notice, to be given within one month after receiving such report, require the landlord to make such alterations and additions therein as may be required to give such sufficient, suitable, and proper accommodation as aforesaid."

What was the position of a landlord in this matter? Take the case of a farm under lease. The landlord might under this provision be compelled to build entirely new cottages without any consideration whatever in the matter of rent. Take the case of a tenant farmer who applied some rooms, which had been erected for other purposes, to the accommodation of some of his farm-servants. The machinery of the Bill might be set in motion, with the result that the landlord might be compelled to erect entirely new buildings for the accommodation of farm servants. There was one other grave defect in the proposals of the hon. Member, and that was that they did not deal with one of the most difficult problems in sanitary administration. They might require good and sanitary buildings to be erected, but how were they going to secure that those buildings should be kept in thoroughly good order? He was aware of the fact that under the Act of 1867 there was great difficulty indeed in the public authority compelling occupiers of houses to keep them in good sanitary condition. He considered this Bill was unnecessary, because it proposed to deal with one particular class of the community in a different way from that in which other classes were dealt with under existing Legislation. He held that what was necessary and desirable was more vigorous action on the part of the existing local authorities, and a general Amendment of the Public Health Act, which would apply, not to one class, but to all classes of the community. They might then expect to see the public health laws carried more effectively into operation, and the happiness and the comfort in the homes of all classes secured. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

*CAPTAIN T. HOPE (Linlithgowshire) supported the Amendment. There was a general feeling on the part of those interested in local administration in Scotland that it was very desirable to have a thoroughly good Act, amending and improving the Public Health Acts, so as to bring them more up to date; but there was, he submitted, a very great objection to taking up the case of one particular section of the community, and especially to taking it up on such poor grounds as had been stated in support of this Bill. He failed to recognise a description either of the Scotch farm-servants or of the Scotch farm-servants' houses in the somewhat vivid passages which were read by the hon. Member for Elgin. He imagined that those who wrote those passages had been accustomed to visit very different parts of Scotland to any he was familiar with. He had no desire to stand in the way of any improvement it was possible to make in the dwelling-houses or in the means local authorities had of insisting that dwelling-houses should be kept in a sanitary condition, but he did desire to see a question of this kind approached as one affecting the whole community. There ought not, in a matter of this kind, to be any piecemeal Legislation. The hon. Member laid great stress upon what he (Captain Hope) believed was practically the custom in certainly all well-regulated farms, namely, to keep separate the labourers of the two sexes. The hon. Member opposite said the Bill provided for separate accommodation, but that there was to be no compulsion to use that separate accommodation. That seemed to him to be a curious provision. He thought it quite right to provide separate accommodation for the sexes; but he did not see the advantage of providing it if there was to be no compulsion to use it. He noticed that Section 6 of the Bill provided that two householders should send notice in writing to the medical officer that a building in their district was in an unsanitary condition before the medical officer could take action in regard to that building. But if a building were unsuited for habitation, why should a written notice from two householders be necessary in order to put the sanitary officer in operation? Surely it was the duty of the medical officer to inspect such buildings, and if he found them unsanitary to insist on their being put into a state fit for habitation. If a necessity existed for an improvement in the public health Legislation of the country, the matter should be dealt with as a whole, and not piecemeal, and in relation solely to one particular class, or a portion of one particular class of the community. He begged to second the Amendment.

*DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, the Report on the Housing of the Rural Population of Scotland was a sufficient justification for the Introduction of the Bill; and, besides, the Bill was a necessary corollary to the Local Government Act passed last year. Under the existing law, houses could be inspected and could be condemned by the medical officer if unsanitary; but in many instances it was found impractical to give full legal effect to the medical officer's report, because it would mean that the unfortunate occupier of the condemned house would be flung out on the roadside without a proper substitute being provided for his accommodation. What was wanted was, that the medical officer should be allowed to dispose as well as propose; that he should be able to say that not only that a particular house should come down, but that another, fit for habitation, should be built by the proprietor. As a landlord in Aberdeen, he was not afraid of the Bill, for although it might entail additional expenses on the owners of land, he felt sure that the local authorities would deal leniently with existing proprietors, and would not attempt to put the provision of the measure into operation with anything like a revolutionary rush. As a rule proprietors were compelled to set the houses on their estates in order. If they did not provide fairly good cottages for the labourers they would not be able to let their farms. But there were some landlords whose impecunious condition did not permit them to erect proper cottages on their farms, and he thought they should be assisted in carrying out the excellent object of the Bill by being allowed to borrow money from the State on easier terms than was now possible. The argument of his hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill was simply that, if they could not do everything, they must do nothing. He thought the question the House had to consider was, whether a strong and overwhelming case had been made out that one section of the community should have priority over the other sections in the treatment of their grievances. Such a case for special action in regard to the farm servants of Scotland had, he thought, been fully made out. Never mind the details of the Bill. No doubt, some of its provisions should be amended in Committee; but, looking at the Bill as a whole, he unhesitatingly supported its Second Reading.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton) said, that, according to the hon. Member for West Aberdeen, the House was not to mind the details of the Bill. For his part, he desired to protest against the growing practice of introducing Bills, and passing them to a Second Reading, irrespective of the nature of the provisions of those Bills. It was to the details of the measure that he took exception. They all wished to see the agricultural labourers better housed, but he doubted whether the Bill provided the best means for securing that desirable object. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill said the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890 had been proved to be utterly inadequate for the purpose in view; and in support of that contention he quoted descriptions of the state of things in certain districts of Scotland, which were very deplorable. In the part of Scotland with which he was best acquainted, he was glad to say that the bothie system did not prevail. It had been given up long ago, and the sooner it was given up in other parts of Scotland the better. But he thought the houses described by the hon. Member were fit subjects for the Act of 1890. Was there any medical officer who would pass as fit for human habitation houses in which, according to the hon. Member, the labourers had to lie on the floor, looking out at the stars through the broken roof, through which the water also poured when it rained?

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, the difficulty was, that the absence of power to compel repair and the erection of new dwellings, restrained the medical officers from condemning existing dwellings even when unfit for human habitation.

*SIR HERBERT MAXWELL thought the hon. Member showed his want of acquaintance with agricultural matters in putting forward such an objection. Everyone who knew anything about agricultural land knew that farms could not be worked without dwellings for the labourers, and if the dwellings were unfit for human habitation, and were pulled down, they must be replaced by others, or the lands could not be worked, Besides, the tenant had his remedy against the landlord. ["No, no!"] There were very few landlords, indeed, who would hesitate for a moment to replace a building that had been condemned by the sanitary authorities. In some cases, he admitted, the building was not replaced. The hon. Member for Elgin and Nairn said that the powers of the Medical Officer were not sufficient at the present time. He must come before the hon. Member in a white sheet. Two years ago, on his own property in Scotland, a cottage was condemned by the local authority. But what was that cottage? It was extremely interesting from an antiquarian point of view as a relic of a past state of things altogether, and the ancient dwelling had been allowed to stand for generations by the roadside. It was a dwelling for which he, as landlord, got no rent; it was not included in any farm, but had been taken possession of by an aged crippled man of, he was sorry to say, very irregular habits. This man was permitted to live in the shanty, and the sanitary authorities condemned it as unfit for human habitation. Nobody disputed that, and least of all himself. It was, accordingly, pulled down. But what was the end of the old man? He was taken to the workhouse, and within six months he was dead, his death being generally attributed to his having to give up his free and easy and somewhat disreputable style of life. Even now the sanitary authorities had considerable powers under the existing Acts. He found that in the County of Renfrew, last year, no fewer than 40 dwellings were pulled down, having been condemned as unfit for human habitation. So, although he was prepared to admit that the words of the Act of 1890 were somewhat rigid and ought to be made more elastic so as to put an end to houses not dangerous to, but unsuitable for human life, still he said that if the present Act was administered with a little more spirit and diligence by the local authorities, landlords would be stimulated to take prompter means for improving the state of matters. He ventured to say that few hon. Members would corroborate the picture that had been drawn by the hon. Member for Elgin and Nairn. He did not deny that in some districts, especially those verging on the Highlands, there were dwellings which it was deplorable to see in any civilised land. But it was also the case that these dwellings were steadily disappearing. This improvement could not be effected in a single year, and the landlord had often difficulties to encounter in the matter. As an instance of this he mentioned that two years ago he visited three labourers cottages on his own property, which he had built about seventeen years ago, and while two of them were now in a perfect state of repair the occupant of the third had by neglect allowed it to become so dilapidated and so filthy that had it stood alone many a man would have said it was unfit for human habitation. It must not be forgotten that, while undoubtedly there were duties incumbent upon the landlords, and very heavy responsibilities for making this provision, there were also duties incumbent upon the tenants and labourers in order to take advantage of this provision and maintain their dwellings in suitable repair. He trusted the Lord Advocate would express some opinion upon the merits of this measure as compared with the suggestion he had ventured to lay before the House as to amending the original Act.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross) remarked that they were, of course, only now on the Second Reading, and were not considering whether every clause of the Bill was so worded as not to admit of amendment. He might say at the outset that the objections taken to the Bill were by no means of a consistent or harmonious character. They had been told in some speeches that there was no need for the Bill, and he rather understood the suggestion was that the Bill was not required, because there was no necessity for having the kind of improvements in agricultural labourers' cottages proposed by it. In the second place it was said there was no need for the Bill because the existing Acts of Parliament, and particularly the Public Health Act of 1867 and the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, were adequate to meet the case. But that did not consist with the Amendment which had been moved by his hon. Friend the Member for West Renfrewshire, which was that—

> "That this House, whilst recognising the desirability of amending and rendering more effective the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867, considers it undesirable to legislate on this subject without conferring the benefits equally on all classes of the community."

So that the position of those who approved of this Bill, as they on the Government Bench did, was that they were between two fires. The suggestion was—on the one hand, that the Bill was unnecessary; and on the other, that it was desirable, but that it was too restricted in its scope, and should be made universal. He left these arguments to destroy each other, and he would state very briefly the views of the Government. Something had been said of the condition of agricultural labourers' cottages in Scotland. That, he should say, was a varying condition, there being great difference between agricultural labourers' dwellings in different parts of the country and on different estates. Having known Scotland all his life, he said there had undoubtedly been in many parts a great improvement, but at the same time no one who knew Scotland would say there was not room and necessity for a great improvement in many other places, and on many estates. And so without going into the question as to how far there was a necessity all over the country or over all estates for such a measure, he thought they should be agreed that it was not a superfluity to demand, in the case of agricultural labourers' cottages, some safeguards of the kind proposed by the Bill. It had been asked—Why deal differently with agricultural labourers dwellings from others? He should be glad to see the Public Health Act, and other acts amended, but everyone who had had anything to do with these Acts was well aware that probably no class of statutes was so full of contentious matter or so certain to raise controversies. Wherever they encountered medical gentlemen and sanitary inspectors they got into questions of the greatest difficulty, and on which there were the sharpest differences of opinion. Successive Governments had long been looking forward to amending the Public Health Act, but the Amendments required would be so numerous, and the controversies upon some of the subjects so bitter, that, to accomplish the object in view, must occupy a serious amount of time. But in this Bill there were definite proposals with respect to a particular class of dwellings. What was the position of the agricultural labourer in most parts of Scotland as regards his dwelling? He had to live beside his work, either in the farm-steading or near it, and very often the steading was far from any village or town. Accordingly he was not in the position of a workman who had the choice of his dwelling. If, therefore, there could be special reason for taking up the case of a class which was homogeneous in itself, and which could be dealt with in all parts of the country by a similar remedy, such special reason was established in regard to agricultural labourers' dwellings. It was quite true that under the 16th Section of the Public Health Act of 1867, there were important powers for dealing with insanitary or even inadequate dwellings, but the case had to be proved under the name of a nuisance, which threw a very heavy onus upon the prosecuting party. Again, the words "dangerous to health" under the Act of 1890 also, it was felt, involved too heavy a burden of proof. Some legislation was wanted which should not go the length of demanding proof of nuisance or danger to health if the dwelling was disadvantageous to or unsuitable for human habitation. Now the Bill proposed three things, all of them of a positive and simple character. The first was, that in the case of houses to be occupied by agricultural labourers, there should be sufficient and suitable accommodation. That was the very thing which the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell) desiderated, because it described something short of a nuisance or of being dangerous to health, but still disadvantageous or inappropriate for human habitation. The second head provided for the separation of the sexes —a provision which was levelled at the bothy system. No one who had known Scotland as long as he had, could contend that the bothy system had not been a source of moral mischief, and, although the system was disappearing, it was not so in all cases, for sometimes unmarried persons of different sexes were still thrown into such proximity that great evil resulted. The third provision was not the least valuable of all, and that was the power to local authorities to make bye-laws relative to what should be required in such dwellings. No one could object to that, because it was in accordance with the whole tendency of modern legislation. Those bye-laws would gradually give a standard to which agricultural labourers' dwellings should come up.

*Mr. RENSHAW: Varying in every locality?

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR thought they would vary very little, because the value of bye-laws was that they tended to uniformity of standard, though he could conceive differences of local circumstances would make bye-laws suitable for one locality unsuitable for another. There was wanted for the rural districts what in Scotland was called a "Dean of Guild" or Ædile jurisdiction to direct and regulate buildings somewhat similar to that which had long existed with much public advantage in towns. In regard to the position of the landlord, of course it must be at his cost that the improvements required for health and decency should be made, and he would get the benefit of that at the expiry of the lease in increased letting value. The tenant paid his rent for what was let to him, and the hypothesis of improvements being added must be that the houses let were not fit or suitable for the occupation of the labourers. He hoped the House would give a Second Reading to this moderate and desirable Bill, while leaving it open to amendment in Committee.

Sir J. FERGUSSON said the only difficulty he had about assenting to the Bill was the speech of the Mover, whose description of the state of the housing of the working classes in the country districts of Scotland was altogether exaggerated, and his condemnation of the manner in which landed proprietors performed their duties utterly undeserved. Still, he recognised that it was very desirable the law should be further strengthened in order that houses which were unsuitable for the occupation of decent people should be put into proper repair. He should be sorry to stand in the way of such improvements. From that point of view he ventured to suggest to his hon. Friend the Member for Renfrewshire, than whom there was no more earnest reformer, not to press his Amendment, so that both sides might combine with the Government in endeavouring to make this an adequate and proper measure for the great object in view.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read 2ª.

## *MOTIONS.*

### SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maurice Healy, Bill to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act, 1887.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 185.]

### FISHERIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to amend the Fisheries Acts.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 186.]

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Thursday, 28th March 1895.*

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## COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—

1.—Consolidated Fund (No. 1).

2.—Australian Colonies Customs Duties.

The Lord Commissioners were the Lord Chancellor, the Marquess of Breadalbane, and Lord Kensington.

## STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS AND CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that they have appointed a Select Committee of Six Members to join with the Select Committee appointed by this House, as mentioned in their Lordships' Message of Friday last, to consider all Statute Law Revision Bills and Consolidation Bills of the present Session.

## SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.—[H.L.]

Order of the 4th instant referring the Bill to a Select Committee, discharged.

## SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[H.L.]

Report from the Select Committee (with the proceedings of the Committee) made, and to be printed. [No. 51.]

Bill reported with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House; and to be printed as amended. [No. 52.]

## PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER AND CONFIRMATION BILLS.

The Earl of MORLEY moved :—

That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 25th day of June next :

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order in pursuance of a Report of the Board of Agriculture relating to the enclosure or regulation of a common, or confirming any scheme certified by the said Board relating to a Metropolitan common, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a first time after Tuesday the 7th day of May next.

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or provisional certificate shall be read a first time after Tuesday the 7th day of May next :

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order in pursuance of a report of the Board of Agriculture relating to the enclosure or regulation of a common, or confirming any scheme certified by the said Board relating to a Metropolitan common, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 25th day of June next :

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 25th day of June next :

That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments, these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended :

That this House will not receive any Petition for a Private Bill after Tuesday the 30th day of April next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice ; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after Friday the 3rd day of May next :

That this House will not receive any Report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday, the 3rd day of May next.

Motion agreed to.

## LAND TRANSFER BILL.

Amendment reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow.

### SHOP HOURS BILL.

Lord RIBBLESDALE, in moving the Second Reading of the Shop Hours Bill, said the object of the Bill, which consisted of one clause only, was to remedy a defect in the Act of 1892. The 4th Section of that Act directed that every employer of labour or owner of a shop should put up in a conspicuous place on his premises or shop a notice stating the hours of labour, but it did not provide any penalty on summary conviction for breach or neglect of the Section. A case was tried in the Queen's Bench in December last, and the necessity of the Bill was then established. The one clause in it provided that on the summary conviction of a person for not posting up the notice referred to a fine of 40s. would be recoverable.

Bill read 2ª.

### SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL. [H.L.]

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

### MORTGAGEES' COSTS BILL.

Lord MACNAGHTEN moved the Second Reading of this Bill, remarking that it dealt with a technical point in the law relating to mortgagees, and that its object was to do away with a rule which, he thought, was due to over-refinement on the part of Chancery Judges. In cases of money raised on mortgages a person, had, of course, to pay the costs of the mortgagee for investigating the title and completing the mortgage; but if the mortgagee happened to be a solicitor the Court declared that he was not to receive any remuneration for his labour. The same rule applied after the mortgage was completed. He thought their Lordships would agree that the rule was unreasonable; moreover, it was easily evaded; it was rarely put in force unless there was ill-will between the parties, and it led to more expense than it saved. The House of Commons thought the rule should be abolished, and had passed the Bill, and he felt confident their Lordships would take a similar view of the matter.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had no objection to the Second Reading of the Bill, but it had been pointed out to him that other professional men than solicitors were unable to obtain their charges when they became mortgagees, and he could see no reason why the Bill should not be extended to them also. He did not know whether his noble and learned Friend had any objection to this extension of the Bill, which, in its title, was not confined to solicitors, but he thought the point was one which deserved consideration in Committee on the measure.

Lord MACNAGHTEN said he would confer with his noble and learned Friend on the question, but he might mention that there was this distinction in the matter—that provision was made for taxing the cost of solicitors which did not apply to other professional men, and solicitors being officers of the Court, it was more easy to deal with the question of costs in their cases than in those of other persons.

Bill read 2ª.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Five o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday, 28th March 1895.*

The House met at Three of the clock.

### COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners; the House went, and, being returned; Mr. Speaker reported the Royal Assent to—

1.—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Act, 1895.

2.—Australian Colonies Duties Act, 1895.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### BRITISH INDIA.

*MR. D. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, to ascertain the correctness of Lord Cromer's statement of 1882 about the annual average income per head, and to show whether the people of British India are improving or becoming worse in their material condition, he will grant the Return for which a Motion stands on this day's Paper; and whether, if he be unwilling to grant as a Return the details of Lord Cromer's calculations, as asked in the first part of the Motion, he will give an opportunity to the hon. Member for Central Finsbury of personally inspecting them?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick), answering, in the absence of Mr. H. H. Fowler, said, considering that the statement to which my hon. Friend refers, was confessedly founded upon uncertain data, and that any similar calculation, which might now be made, must be founded on equally uncertain data, and might probably be misleading, the Secretary of State is unable to agree to my hon. Friend's Motion.

### PRISON CLERKS.

MR. M. FOWLER (Durham, City): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what board and lodging allowance per diem has the Treasury approved for clerks sent from their own prison to another on temporary duty; and whether the Treasury has sanctioned the reduction of the Commissioners of Prisons of this allowance by one-half after the first three weeks; and, if so, upon what grounds, seeing that the clerk's expenses must necessarily be about the same as during the first three weeks?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The allowance is 8s. for each day and night during the first three weeks. The rule of the Department was to reduce the allowance by one-half after the first week, and the extension to three weeks, conferred a considerable benefit on the officers. The reduction is made on the ground that during the period allowed, an officer would reasonably expect to make arrangements for board and lodging on better terms than at first.

### STONEHAVEN HARBOUR.

MR. J. W. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the fishermen at all the principal ports along the coast of Kincardineshire, at a series of meetings held two years ago, unanimously declared by resolution that the enlarging and extending of Stonehaven Harbour would be of the greatest benefit to them in the pursuit of their industry; and that the Harbour Commissioners of Stonehaven, after raising a considerable sum by local effort, applied to the Fishery Board for a sum of £3,000 as a collateral security by means of which, and of a guarantee on the rates of the burgh, they would have been enabled to borrow from the Loan Commissioners the amount required to extend and enlarge the harbour; and that the Fishery Board, though they have frequently recognised the claim of Stonehaven, now refuse this sum, on the ground that they would not be justified in granting money for such a purpose; and whether there is anything in the Acts which put the present funds at the disposal of the Fishery Board, which would preclude their applying a portion of it to Stonehaven for this purpose?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Fishery Board that, as stated, the fishermen at all the principle ports along the coast of Kincardineshire have unanimously approved of the enlarging of Stonehaven Harbour, and that the Harbour Trustees, after raising a considerable sum by local effort, applied to the Fishery Board to become collateral security for a loan of £3,000, which would have enabled the Trustees to borrow an amount sufficient to cover the cost of the proposed improvements, which the Board were reluctantly compelled to decline. There is nothing in the Acts, or otherwise, to preclude the Fishery Board from giving assistance to Stonehaven Harbour, except the large number of applications from small and struggling localities, as well as from various important fishery centres, and the limited fund at the disposal of the Board for such undertakings.

### CANADIAN CATTLE.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he has received copies of the Official Reports of the Veterinary Inspectors who investigated some recent cases of alleged pleuro-pneumonia in Canadian cattle landed in Belgium; whether he has also received a Report from the Minister of Agriculture on the health of cattle in the Dominion of Canada; and whether he proposes to publish these documents in the Official Journal of the Board, or otherwise?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HERBERT GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I have taken the necessary steps to obtain, if possible, copies of the Reports to which my hon. Friend refers, but they have not as yet reached me. I received the Report alluded to in the second paragraph of the question yesterday. I shall be glad to consider whether these further documents can conveniently be published in the Journal of the Board, or otherwise.

### EDINBURGH TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

MR. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, will he explain how it is that, although an open examination was held about 15 months ago for vacancies in the Telegraph Department in Edinburgh, the successful candidates, after some 12 months' attendance in the Telegraph School, have been informed that there are no vacancies, and that they must wait on indefinitely for appointments; and, whether working overtime is optional to clerks in the Edinburgh Office; and, if so, why have the clerks there been punished for declining to work overtime?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): In consequence of the unfortunate stagnation of telegraph business, which has resulted from the general stagnation of trade, the Telegraph Establishment at Edinburgh has been found to be in excess of its requirements. In consequence of this, learners have not been required to fill places as soon as was anticipated. They will, however, receive appointments as vacancies occur. I should add, however, that the Department has done what it could for these lads by offering them appointments on the postal side. As regards overtime, it is my desire to reduce it as far as possible. But it is the duty of every officer in the Postal Service to give such extra attendance at all times as the circumstances may call for. So long, however, as there are Volunteers for the duty, it is not the practice to enforce overtime on those who are reluctant to undertake it.

### THE NEW CODE.

MR. ANSTRUTHER, on behalf of the hon. Member for the Partick Division of Lanark (Mr. J. PARKER-SMITH): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, why the subject of Natural History of Animals and Plants has been dropped from the class subjects for Standards IV., V., and VI. in the new Code; and, whether, inasmuch as the effect may be to discourage the study of Natural History in the higher standards, teachers will, under the Supplementary Schedule, have the same encouragement to teach the subject as hitherto?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): In place of the Elementary Science Course, which appeared in the Schedule of Class Subjects in former Codes, has been substituted the course which formerly appeared in the Supplement to the Schedule as the Science to Common Things. The reason was, that this was regarded as a more useful and practicable example of a General Science Course. This substituted course does not provide for the teaching of the Natural History of Plants and Animals after Standard III. is passed; but there is full liberty for managers to obtain the sanction of the Department to any alternative Science Course which they may desire, and they may present, if they think fit, the course which has been omitted, or a course dealing to a larger extent with Natural History. I do not think this change in the Code will have the effect suggested. The Department are far from desiring to discourage the study of Natural History.

### ENFIELD ORDNANCE FACTORY.

CAPTAIN H. F. BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when he proposes to place the Ordnance Factory at Enfield again on full time; and, because of the long duration of short time at the factory, will he allow the loss of time consequent on the factory being closed on the 1st and 2nd April for stock-taking to be made up?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. W. WOODALL, Hanley): The amount of work which can at present be assigned to the Small Arms Factory at Enfield is not sufficient to justify the resumption of full time without much larger reductions of numbers than are contemplated, and it is not proposed to work on Saturdays. It is not intended to ask the men to work up the days of closure for annual stocktaking.

### MILITARY OPERATIONS IN INDIA.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the consent of both Houses of Parliament, under Section 55 of 21 & 22 Vic., c. 106 (an Act for the Better Government of India), was obtained for the expenditure on Military operations beyond the west and north-west frontiers of India of the following sums (shown in a Parliamentary Return, entitled "East India (Military Expenditure beyond the Frontier)," and dated India Office, February 1895, viz.: Rx.159,116, in 1884–5; Rx.2,121,086, in 1885–6; Rx.116,055, in 1888–9; Rx.4,825, in 1889–90; Rx.143,730, in 1890–91; and, upon what date, with reference to each of the sums mentioned in the previous question, was the consent of the House of Commons and the House of Lords respectively obtained for such expenditure?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The figures given in the Return under the heads "Expeditions and Explorations," "Expenditure in the Military Department," do not relate to what are called in Clause 55 of the Act for the Better Government of India "Military Operations carried on beyond the External Frontiers" of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions for which, as the hon. Baronet points out, the consent of Parliament is necessary; and, as a matter of fact, there were during the period covered by the Return no "Military operations beyond the External Frontiers" on the north-west, which were held to fall within the scope of Section 55 of the Act; a reference to the Return, which comprises such items as "Railways," "Fortifications," and "Cantonments," shows that it does not refer to expenditure beyond the frontiers of India in the strict sense of the words.

### CLAIM AGAINST CHILI.

*SIR DONALD MACFARLANE (Argyll): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the claim of Captain M'Phail, of the British ship *St. Mary's Bay*, of Glasgow, against the Chilian Government, has yet been adjusted; and, if so, when he expects it will be settled?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Her Majesty's Legation at Santiago have instructions to take the necessary steps to have this claim brought before the Mixed Commission, which is now sitting; but it is not possible to say when this particular claim will be adjudicated upon. The Commission is, by Article 7 of the Convention between Great Britain and Chili, allowed a year in which to discharge its duties, with power, under certain circumstances, to prolong its existence for an additional six months.

### LION TAMERS' EXHIBITIONS.

*SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of a lion tamer named Rowland, connected with a travelling menagerie, who is reported to have been savagely attacked by a lioness three times within a few days, and in one instance terribly injured and rescued with great difficulty, while in another the spectators became panic stricken, women fainted, and several persons fell and were trampled upon; and whether he has any power to discourage or suppress such dangerous exhibitions?

MR. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to this case, but I have no power to interfere with exhibitions of this kind.

## LONGFORD QUARTER SESSIONS.

Mr. JUSTIN McCARTHY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that in the northern division of the county of Longford the Quarter Sessions are held only twice in the year, that is, in April and October, and then only for one day each time, and that litigants and jurors from the Granard division of the county are compelled to attend at Longford four times yearly, a distance to most of them of more than 20 miles and without the advantage of railway communication; and (2) whether it would be possible to have the county divided for legal purposes as it now is for Parliamentary purposes, and to have the County Court judges sitting as often in the northern as in the southern division?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I understand the facts are stated with substantial accuracy in the first part of the question, though I am also informed that the transaction of the criminal business at Granard, as well as at Longford, would be attended with difficulty and inconvenience to witnesses. As regards the second paragraph, there is power to alter the existing divisions and to appoint additional places for holding Quarter Sessions, and if a memorial from persons resident in the county and interested in the subject be forwarded to the Lord Lieutenant the matter will at once be carefully considered.

## GOVERNMENT BILLS.

Sir ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill is likely to be fixed, when the Light Railways Bill will be introduced in pursuance of the Reports of the Departmental Conference and Committee, and when the Sea Fisheries Bill will be introduced in accordance with the recommendations in the Report of the Select Committee of the House?

Mr. C. W. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Her Majesty's Government have yet been able to fix a day for the Second Reading of their Conciliation (Trade Disputes) Bill; and whether they will at the same time facilitate the Second Reading of the other two Arbitration and Conciliation Bills now before the House with a view to referring them all to a Select Committee so as to ensure as far as possible some legislation on the subject during the present Session?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) said, that the Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill would depend on the progress made with the other business of the House. He desired, however, to take it at the earliest possible moment. In answer to the hon. Member for Barrow, he said that he was prepared to allow the other two Bills to be read a second time when the Government had obtained a Second Reading for their Bill, so that the Bills might go together to the Grand Committee. As to the Light Railways Bill, he was looking for the first possible opportunity to introduce it, and he was still in hope of being able to do so early next week.

Mr. G. WHITELEY (Stockport): Does the same answer apply to the Factories and Workshops Bills and the Truck Acts Amendment Bill?

Mr. ASQUITH: We hope to take those two Bills at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is it not the case that the Government always block private Members' Conciliation Bills when they come on?

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir; it is not the fact. The Government have stated on all occasions that these Bills would proceed *pari passu.*

Mr. G. W. WOLFF (Belfast E.): Will the Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill be taken before midnight or after?

Mr. BRYCE: I hope to take it before Twelve o'clock.

## ROYAL ARTILLERY BANDS.

Mr. G. H. ALLSOPP (Worcester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in reference to the reply given by him to a similar question last Session, what steps have been taken to supply bands to the Royal Artillery in large stations and districts other than Woolwich and Aldershot?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) : It has not been found possible to provide for this service in this year's Estimates.

### OUTRAGE AT ATHEA.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) whether his attention has been called to a recent outrage upon a man named Shea, of Athea, a labourer in the service of John Danaher ; (2) whether he is aware that previous to the attempted murder a series of resolutions denouncing Danaher by name, and generally denouncing land grabbers in the neighbourhood, had been passed, and that such a resolution was passed by the Athea branch of the Irish National Federation in May 1894, and a similar resolution passed in the same month by the Guardians of the Newcastle West Union ; (3) whether he is aware that a third resolution was passed by a meeting of delegates from Limerick and Kerry, held at Athea in June ; that a fourth resolution was passed by the Athea branch of the Irish National Federation in September ; that on September 16 the branch actively boycotted persons working for Danaher ; that at a meeting held at Athea on October 14 the hon. Member for West Limerick attended and declared that he would have no hesitation in speaking for West Limerick that the grabber would get a hot time of it for the next few weeks ; (4) whether he is aware that, in December, Danaher's premises were fired into by Moonlighters ; that a sixth meeting was held on January 20th, 1895, for the purpose of denouncing Danaher ; that on March 3rd a seventh meeting was held for the purpose of further boycotting Danaher ; and that on the 14th instant Shea was shot and dangerously wounded ; (5) and, if he can state what protection, if any, was accorded during the past six months to the people thus threatened ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : My attention has been called to the recent outrage on Timothy Shea referred to in the first paragraph of the question. Proceedings are now pending against one person who was arrested in connection with the outrage the day after its committal. It is the fact that meetings have been held, as stated, at which resolutions were passed directed against Danaher, but there is no evidence of what transpired at these meetings, all of which, with the exception of that held on October 14, were held indoors. With regard to the alleged firing into the premises of Danaher in December last, it is true that it was alleged that, on December 4, a shot was fired for the purpose of intimidation in the yard of the house of John Danaher, father of the man who has taken the evicted farm, but the police entertain doubts about the genuineness of the alleged outrage. In reference to the last paragraph, I am informed that John Danaher would not allow police into his house for his protection, nor would he allow them to accompany him on a car. He receives, however, protection by patrols both by day and night, and his son, who occupies the evicted farm is similarly protected. Shea was also protected in the ordinary manner.

### WEIGHING CATTLE.

Mr. H. T. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews Burghs) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether auctioneers who have erected cattle-weighing machines within their auction marts are bound to issue to the seller or buyer a ticket specifying the true weight of the cattle weighed ; whether a ticket which does not give the odd pounds, if any, sufficiently specifies the true weight ; and, whether the Board of Agriculture will issue a Memorandum directing the attention of auctioneers to the duties which the Weighing of Cattle Acts, 1887 and 1891, require them to perform ; and, if auctioneers fail to perform these duties, what steps can be taken by farmers to compel auctioneers to give them the facilities conferred by the Statutes in question.

*Mr. HERBERT GARDNER : An auctioneer cannot, unless specially exempted, sell cattle at any mart where cattle are habitually or periodically sold, unless weighing accommodation is provided, and a proper person appointed to have charge of the machine. If that person refuses or neglects to weigh cattle, when required, or to deliver to the seller or buyer a ticket specifying the true weight of the cattle, he is liable to a penalty. There is no definition of "true weight" in the Statute, and it would be for the Court to determine in each instance whether, having regard to the particular machine in use, the person giving the ticket had sufficiently complied with the requirements of the Statute. A circular letter on the subject of the Acts in question was issued in November, 1891, and we are constantly bringing under the notice of auctioneers their liability under those Acts. I doubt whether the issue of a further Memorandum would be of advantage, but I shall be glad to make inquiries on the point. Any person can take proceedings against an auctioneer who makes default in complying with the requirements of the Act of 1891.

## WATER SUPPLY.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the provisions of the Waterworks Clauses Act, 1847, which impose on the Water Companies the duty of keeping charged with water at all times (except when prevented by frost) all their pipes to which fire-plugs are attached; and, whether he has any power to enforce compliance by the Water Companies with this enactment; and, if so, whether he will at once take steps to secure that their pipes shall be kept properly charged with water for the purpose of extinguishing fire?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I am aware of the provisions of the Waterworks Clauses Act, 1847, to which my hon. Friend refers, but I have no power to enforce compliance by the Water Companies with this enactment. It appears that the only remedy is by way of *mandamus*, but I am unable to say who is to apply for the *mandamus*.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON asked the right hon. Gentleman whether his Department was not the authority to deal with all questions under the Act.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that was not so. If anybody had authority it was the local authority; but the Act did not define what authority was to enforce the provision.

## VOLUNTEER LONG SERVICE MEDALS.

*Captain HOPE (Linlithgow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, is it an established rule that when medals are granted to officers and men of Her Majesty's regular troops the name of the recipient is engraved on each medal before issue; if so, why has the practice not been followed in regard to the long service medals now being issued to the Volunteer forces?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is the practice to mark medals issued to the Regular Forces; but, as regards those for the Volunteers, great delay would have been caused by marking each medal; and as it was desired to make an issue of medals as early as possible, it was decided to leave them unmarked. I may add that no representation on the subject has been received from the Volunteers.

*Captain HOPE asked if the right hon. Gentleman would make an allowance to Volunteer Commanding Officers who get the names put on the medals before issuing them, to cover the cost.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the War Office had received no representation on the subject, but if he found there was a general desire that something of the sort should be done, he would be glad to consider it.

## THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Mr. H. E. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Board of Agriculture has, since its formation, consisted of three divisions, the statistical, land, and veterinary; whether the veterinary division has recently been re-named the Animals' Division, and what circumstances have arisen to necessitate this change; whether he is aware that the Veterinary Profession regard the change of name of the Department with dissatisfaction, as failing to recognise the valuable national work which has, through their efforts, been achieved; whether it is intended to appoint a veterinarian to the vacant post of Director of the Veterinary Department; what officer in the meantime is entrusted with the duties performed by the late Director; and will he explain why the professional duties of the Department are now conducted by two scientific officers, whereas for many years three have been employed?

*MR. HERBERT GARDNER: On the retirement of the late Director of the Veterinary Department in December, 1893, I found it necessary to re-distribute the business performed by the principal officers of that Department, so as to enable the scientific officers to devote themselves exclusively to work for which the possession of veterinary knowledge is requisite, and to place the business of an executive and non-professional character in the hands of the officers best qualified to perform it. These latter officers constitute the division of the office now known as the Animals' Division, to which the term "veterinary" would have been inappropriate, seeing that the Veterinary officers have a separate status. The new organisation has been in full operation for the past 15 months, and there is no vacant post to be filled, nor is it necessary to make any new professional appointment now that the scientific officers are in a position to devote themselves to professional work. I am sorry that any members of the Veterinary Profession should have been led to regard this re-distribution of business as an indication of a lack of appreciation of their work. Quite the contrary is the case, and I may say that during the present year we have been glad to avail ourselves of the services of the members of the Profession to a much larger extent than has been the case for very many years past.

## LIMERICK AND KILLALOE CANAL.

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will make inquiries on the complaints of the lock keepers and others employed on the canal between Limerick and Killaloe, under the control of the Board of Works in Ireland, as to their insufficient rate of weekly wages; whether that rate, for night and day service, exceeds 7s. weekly; and if that, on their petition to the Commissioners in Dublin, an increase was recommended, and which was subsequently refused sanction by the London authorities; and whether the Board of Works in Ireland would on inquiry cause a representation to be made, with a view of equalising the rate of wages to the Limerick Canal service to the same standard as paid to the *employés* of the Grand Canal Company, Ireland?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham): Eight out of the nine lock keepers are paid 7s. a week wages, and the remaining one 9s. They are provided with lockhouses to live in, and receive extra pay when employed on repairs near their locks. They are also pensionable out of the Navigation Funds on retirement. Moreover, they are permitted to take farm work in the immediate neighbourhood. In 1893 the men petitioned the Board of Works for an increase of wages. The case was brought before the Treasury, who decided to postpone their decision until certain questions affecting the Canal Revenues had been settled. The men's position is, I believe, not strictly similar to that of the Grand Canal Company's *employés* for various reasons, but I agree with the hon. Member that they have a reasonable claim to some improvement in their wages, and I am now in communication with the Board of Works as to how that improvement can best be effected.

## RELIEF WORKS IN IRELAND.

MR. J. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution passed by the Bawnboy Board of Guardians at their meeting on the 18th instant, requesting that relief works should be started in the divisions of Cloverhill and Garradice, in South Leitrim, and pointing out that 200 families are in a state of destitution and willing to work; whether, as the question of the local taxation is made an element in the granting of relief works, he is aware that in the Benbrack division in the Cavan portion of this Union, where relief works are granted, according to the last Return presented to Parliament, the poor rate was 8d. and the county cess 1s. 9d. in the pound, while in the adjoining division in Leitrim, where the relief works are refused, the poor rate was 1s. and the county cess 2s. 3¼d. in the pound; and whether, under these circumstances, he will reconsider his decision, and direct the works to be begun?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The resolution in question has been received. The last rate, which was struck in December 1894, in Benbrack division, was 1s. 9d., and the valuation per head of the population is nearly the lowest in the Union, namely, 16s. 7d. The rate for Cloverhill is 1s. 5d., and the valuation per head £1 7s. 3d. In Garradice division the rate is 1s. 5d., and the valuation per head £1 18s. 6d. I may add that some 30 persons from Cloverhill have been recommended for employment on the works in Benbrack. The condition of the districts of the union in which works have not been opened is the subject of further inquiry now in progress.

Mr. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked what was the general interval between the recommendation by the local authorities and the sanction by the Board of Works?

Mr. J. MORLEY: By the Local Government Board. He supposed it was two, three, or four days.

Mr. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) whether he is aware that relief work, sanctioned by the Government at Meenaveen, in the parish of Glencolumbkill, County Donegal, was stopped by the action of the local landlords, who object to the construction of a road leading to a limestone quarry at Creenveen; (2) whether, seeing that the opening up of this quarry was earnestly requested by the inhabitants, and would confer a great boon on the Musgrave tenantry, he will order it to be recommenced; (3) is he aware that the local landlords allowed all preparations to be made for the institution of the relief work thus sanctioned by the Government, and gave no notice or intimation of their objection until the work had been actually begun; and (4) whether, seeing that owing to this action, a large number of heads of families have been kept out of employment for upwards of three weeks, and will be unable to take relief work unless by allowing their small holdings, which now require cultivation, to lie waste for this year, any allowance can be made to the men who have been thus deprived of employment to enable them to crop their holdings?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I am informed that the landlord gave his consent to the work at the place mentioned as soon as he understood what was intended. His consent was asked for before arrangements to open the work were made, and the work was not commenced until his consent had been obtained. The work was started on the 18th March, and 31 families are employed on it. It is not possible to make these families any allowance as suggested in the last paragraph, I may add that arrangements have been made with the view of enabling all persons employed on relief works to attend to the more important pursuit of sowing their lands.

Mr. E. F. VESEY KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received three Resolutions passed by the Guardians of the Bawnboy Union concerning the need of relief works in other districts of the Union besides those for which provision has already been made; and, whether he will endeavour to meet the wishes of the Guardians?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Resolutions in question have been received. Relief works have been opened for the people of Templeport, Benbrack, and Cloverhill, in the Bawnboy Union, and inquiries are in progress as to the circumstances of the people in other districts of the Union.

## LAND PURCHASE IN IRELAND.

Mr. J. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he can state if it has come to the knowledge of the Land Commission that in the case of Samuel Gordon Dreeminchin, Newtowngore, South Leitrim, a tenant who has purchased his holding on the Godley estate, the late land agent is endeavouring to recover arrears of rent which were understood to have been wiped out at the time of the purchase of this holding; and, whether the Land Commission intend to take any steps for the protection of this tenant in the purchase he has made in their court.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The attention of the Land Commissioners was drawn to this case in January last, and they wrote to the solicitors for the vendors, directing their attention to the irregular proceedings which had been taken against the tenant for the recovery of interest in excess of six months upon the purchase money in cases where the purchases had been completed. The solicitors thereupon informed the agent that no proceedings should be taken against the tenant, save for the purpose of recovering a half-year's interest. The irregular proceedings referred to were for excessive interest and not for arrears of rent due at the date of the agreement to purchase. All arrears of rent are wiped out by force of the 3rd Section of the Land Act, 1888.

### PROVINCIAL TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Mr. VESEY KNOX: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether he is yet in a position to announce his reply to the representations made to him by a deputation of provincial telegraph clerks, which waited on him on 1st January, with reference to a claim for 28s. a week for telegraph clerks after five years' service, together with a proportionate increase for clerks of more than five years' service?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: No, Sir; I am not yet in a position to announce my decision upon the application which the telegraphists made to me for increasing the rates of pay after five years' service.

### "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the contract entered into by the Government with Messrs. Waterlow and Sons Limited for printing and publishing *The Parliamentary Debates* is not the form of contract upon which tenders were submitted by other firms who were desirous of carrying out the work?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: Messrs. Waterlow and Sons' tender for printing and publishing *The Parliamentary Debates*, which forms the basis of the contract granted to them, was made on the same form as those upon which tenders were submitted by other firms who were desirous of carrying out the work. The only difference of substance between the form of tender and the contract as ultimately granted was to enable the Government, should it be desirable, to close the contract before the expiry of three years. The other variations between the contract and the tender are verbal only.

Captain NORTON inquired whether the following words did not occur in the contract entered into with Messrs. Waterlow and Sons Limited: "Connected with the composition, printing, and binding;" whether this did not alter the whole character of the agreement, and whether it did not enable the firm to sublet the reporting to *The Times*, thereby infringing the Resolution passed in the House of Commons in February 1891, and re-affirmed in March 1893.

Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, his hon. Friend was under an entire misapprehension. There was a section in the tender which stated that the contractors might obtain the report of the Debates in the best way they could be got. The only clause with respect to the Resolution of the House of Commons had reference to the printing and binding. The tender was exactly on the same lines that the tenders had been for a number of years past; no change was made; it was exactly on all fours with those of previous years.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if he had heard any complaint as to the character of the Reports, and if they were not very satisfactory?

*Sir J. HIBBERT said, he had not heard any complaint, and he assumed from that circumstance that the Reports were satisfactory.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's) asked if it was not the fact that the words complained of by the hon. Member were not in the original contract?

*Sir J. HIBBERT said, that he would be glad to show the hon. Member both the tender and the contract, when he would see that the words were practically the same in both documents.

### POST CARDS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that much irritation is caused by the regulation which, while permitting a label to be gummed on the address, or front side of a post card, prohibits the attachment of any label or other paper to the back of the card; whether he can see his way to permit cuttings from newspapers, chess problems, or other printed matter to be attached to the backs of post cards without fining the addressee, provided that such cuttings are not larger than the post card itself, and are securely fastened by some adhesive substance, without leaving loose or overlapping edges; and if he cannot give such permission, whether it is permissible, under the Book Post Regulations, to strike out the word "Post card" on a post card, and then to gum a chess problem or cutting from a newspaper on the back, and to transmit such card as book post matter, bearing a halfpenny stamp, as being, in the words of the regulation, "printed matter not being in the nature of a letter"?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: The regulations governing the transmission both of foreign and inland post cards, while allowing a postage and revenue stamp, and a small addressed label to be affixed to the cards, forbid the attachment of any other paper or article whatever, and I am not prepared to relax the regulations in the direction desired by the hon. Member. Nor can I consent to allow post cards on which the words "Post card" have been struck out to be treated as book-packets. Such printed matter as that to which the hon. Member refers can already be sent by book post for a halfpenny, and I have no grounds for thinking that the existing regulations do not sufficiently meet the requirements of the public.

### EASTERN COLONIES MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire what amount the people of the Straits Settlements and Hong Kong ought to pay for military contribution, and what amount they are able to pay for such purpose without interfering with the progress of the several Colonies respectively, and the carrying out of necessary public works, education, etc.?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Her Majesty's Government do not think it would be expedient to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee as proposed. The whole question of the military contribution for the Eastern Colonies is now under the consideration of a special Inter-departmental Committee, and in due course the result arrived at by the Government will be made known.

### TULLAMORE WATER SUPPLY.

MR. L. P. HAYDEN (Rosscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether complaints have reached the Local Government Board as to the incidence of taxation for the water supply of Tullamore, ratepayers living in districts which have not the direct advantage of the supply, having to pay the same poundage rate as those who enjoy that advantage; and whether the Board will recommend the Guardians to levy the contribution in proportion to the advantages concerned?

*MR. J. MORLEY: Complaints of the nature indicated in the question have been received by the Local Government Board. In 1891, the Guardians of the Tullamore Union undertook to provide a new water supply, and decided that the area of charge for the expenditure should be the whole electoral division of Tullamore. The Local Government Board declared the charge accordingly. Subsequently, a Provisional Order was obtained and confirmed by Parliament empowering the Guardians to take lands compulsorily, and a loan was granted on the security of the rates of the division referred to. All this took place publicly and without objection, and the Local Government Board are advised that the arrangement cannot now be altered.

### FOUR ROADS, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will take steps to provide a post office for Four Roads, County Roscommon, there being at the present a delivery on six days in the week, but much inconvenience being felt owing to the want of an office?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: When the official delivery of letters was first afforded in this neighbourhood, some years ago, a post office was also established, a guarantee having been given to cover the deficiency of revenue; but at the end of a year the deficiency was withdrawn, and it became necessary to abolish the office. It seems very doubtful whether the office can now be re-established without a fresh guarantee; but I will have inquiry made in the matter, and let the hon. Member know the result.

### STROKESTOWN WORKHOUSE.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) whether it is in accordance with the regulations governing such appointments that Dr. Dillon, J.P., Dispensary Medical Officer, and Medical Officer of Strokestown Workhouse, should canvas for proxy and other votes at the recent election of Poor Law Guardians; (2) whether this is the same gentleman whose conduct in his dual capacity of doctor and magistrate was censured last year; and (3) what steps he proposes to take in reference to his action?

MR. J. TULLY said, that before the right hon. Gentleman answered the question he desired to know whether, as the first paragraph of the question assumed, without asserting, that the gentleman referred to had done the acts complained of, the right hon. Gentlemen had received from that gentleman a telegram, a copy of which he (Mr. Tully) had got, and which stated—

> "Both paragraphs of question to be asked to-night concerning me utterly false. Never canvassed and was not canvassed.—Dr. DILLON."

*MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot answer the question put by my hon. Friend, but I shall bear these facts in mind. With regard to the question on the Paper, no complaints have been made to the Local Government Board with reference to the alleged canvassing for votes on the part of Dr. Dillon. There is nothing in the Board's Regulations bearing on the matter, but they have always informed Union Officers that they do not consider they should interfere in Poor Law Elections beyond exercising their right to vote, and their privilege of nominating candidates. (2) The Board have no official record as to the alleged censure on this gentleman last year. (3) The question has been referred to the Clerk of the Union, who has been asked if he has received any information as to the charges made against Dr. Dillon.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in reply to a question of mine last year, he did not express a strong disapproval of the conduct of Dr. Dillon?

*MR. J. MORLEY: I do not remember.

MR. HAYDEN: I will put another question on the subject.

### LAND OUT OF CULTIVATION.

MR. M. BIDDULPH (Herefordshire, Ross): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether it would be possible to obtain a Return of the acreage of land thrown out of cultivation in England, and also of the lands held in hand by the owners (other than home farms), together with the rates and taxes payable on the same?

*MR. HERBERT GARDNER: There are no existing statistics from which the proposed Return could be compiled, and any special statistical inquiries would be attended with considerable difficulty and expense. The subject is one, however, which has naturally received consideration at the hands of the Royal Commission, whose publications when complete will, I understand, throw much light upon it, and who are now engaged in making an examination of the facts in particular districts.

### PARISH MEETINGS.

*MR. E. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a chairman of a parish meeting in a parish having no Parish Council will have to be re-elected this year; and whether a parish meeting can elect a vice-chairman?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The first chairman of a parish meeting in a parish having no Parish Council will retire in April 1896. Hence it will not be necessary that a chairman should be elected this year. A parish meeting has no power to elect a vice-chairman.

### PARISH POLLING PLACES.

*MR. W. J. MAXWELL (Dumfriesshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is competent for a returning officer, in the case of a parish not divided into wards, to arrange to have two polling places in a parish, and whether the appointment of two polling places in a parish necessitates a re-arrangement of the statutory list of voters, and by whom is this to be carried out; and whether, with regard to second and subsequent elections, a County Council is entitled to fix the number of polling places in a parish, and give instructions to the assessors to arrange the list of voters accordingly?

**Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN**: If the polling places in a parish are increased, the voters whose names appear upon the Register as voting at a single polling station, and generally in alphabetical order, must be distributed for voting purposes according to the new polling place or places. The returning officer has no power over the Register which became final upon the 28th of February. It appears, therefore, to be impossible at this date to add to the existing polling places. It will clearly be possible for a County Council to arrange for an addition to the present polling stations where necessary before the next election, and to instruct the assessor to divide the list accordingly.

*__Captain HOPE__: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is anything in the Local Government Act of last year which would prevent the County Council making the same arrangement for Parish Council elections as is customary in parishes for School Board elections, whereby there is frequently more than one polling-place in a parish?

**Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN**: I will see whether that is the case.

## THE SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

**Mr. C. B. RENSHAW** (Renfrew, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is intended, under the new Education Code, to dispense with the University preliminary examination in the case of all Queen's students attending the Scottish Universities; and whether it will be possible to insist on this examination in the case of such Queen's students, as a rule, allowing what is contemplated in the Circular of 4th March to be a temporary provision, applying only in the case of a college, making special application and satisfying any special conditions which may be laid down by the Education Department?

**Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN**: It is intended that the University preliminary examination should be dispensed with only in cases where special circumstances are shown to exist. As is explained on page 5 of the Circular, we hope that the dispensation now allowed may be only temporarily necessary; but to insist everywhere rigidly on such a requirement would discourage the first efforts in this new direction in which the Government is very anxious to move.

**Mr. RENSHAW**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland how it is proposed to constitute the Local Committees provided for in Article 91 of the new Scotch Code; and whether he can state what provisions it is proposed to make in order to secure that the Queen's students, in respect of whom the annual grant is to be given, will become teachers, as the provisions in respect of grants in Article 86 do not seem to apply in the case of Queen's students?

**Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN**: Full instructions as to the duties of the Local Committees will be given in a Circular which will be issued in due course. The constitution of any committee proposed by any university or university college which desires to avail itself of the scheme will be carefully considered. Article 97 provides that Queen's students must sign a declaration that they intend to adopt and follow the profession of teacher. This rule is the same as is applied in England and Wales, where great advantage is taken of the facilities which this year, for the first time, are to be extended to Scotland.

**Mr. RENSHAW**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, under Article 70 (4) of the new Scotch Code, it is intended to limit the schools from which pupil teachers may be examined for leaving certificates to those in which secondary education is given; and, if so, whether he would re-consider this provision of the Code, with a view to admitting to this examination, at suitable centres, the pupil teachers from any day schools?

**Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN**: The rules as to the admission of candidates to the leaving certificate examination are not laid down in the Code. It is undesirable to give to that examination anything of a professional character. But we are willing to consider applications for admission on behalf of pupil teachers in schools without secondary departments, provided that they can attend at some centre where the examination is held.

## THE LEE-METFORD RIFLE.

**Mr. J. G. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for War how many Mark I. Lee-Metford magazine rifles, fitted with the original defective bolt-head, have been recalled; how many are now in the hands of the troops; and when it is intended to call in all the Mark I. pattern?

*Mr. W. WOODALL: It is not admitted that the bolt-head in Mark I. is defective. In the original issue there was a defective screw, but that having been replaced, no further cause of complaint has arisen. In the Mark II. rifle an improved bolt is used, but the original bolt-head is quite serviceable. Therefore no rifles have been recalled on account of the bolt-head, and it is not proposed to recall any, or to alter the rifles of Mark I. (now known in consequence of certain other alterations as Mark I.*) which are in store.

## SCIENCE AND ART STUDENTS.

Mr. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state the comparative attendance of Irish and English Science and Art students attending the classes in connection with the Science and Art Department during the past six years?

Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND: I am unable to give the information in the form of average attendance, because no figures of that kind have been tabulated. The total number of students under instruction in England in 1887–8 was 140,003, and in Ireland 14,794. The corresponding figures for 1892–3—the last figures published—were 258,754 and 14,055. I shall be glad to give the hon. Member a table showing the figures for the six years 1887–8 to 1892–3 inclusive.

## DUBLIN GARRISON.

Mr. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the proposed tenders for meat supplies to the troops stationed in Dublin for the six months commencing 1st June, 1895, are to be for refrigerated beef and frozen mutton; whether he is aware that such conditions amount to a preference for foreign meat to the exclusion of native produce; whether there are any sufficient grounds for departing from the existing practice; and whether, if the facts be as stated, he would revert to the existing system?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The tenders for meat for the Dublin Garrison, like those for other stations, will be for both fresh and refrigerated meat. The conditions prescribed do not amount to a preference for foreign meat, but they admit it into restricted competition with home supplies. This is not a departure from the general system, but an application of the general system to the Dublin Garrison. Several military abattoirs were established many years ago, chiefly to secure the efficiency of butchers for field service, and for the instruction of officers in connection with meat supplies. These purposes have been attained, and a sufficient supply of military butchers can be kept efficient with a smaller number of abattoirs, while the instruction of officers in judging meat is specially provided for. Abattoirs are expensive, and the contract system has recently been reverted to at Portsmouth with satisfactory results. The same course is proposed for Dublin, where the decision has been hastened by the fact that if the abattoir had been retained a large expenditure would have been necessary for its reconstruction.

Mr. W. FIELD asked whether it was not the fact that the existing system had given satisfaction to the military authorities of Dublin?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think there has been any positive dissatisfaction with the present system; but it is believed that the other system of doing away with abattoirs and throwing ourselves on the public trade is better, and has been found to be better, for the service in other places.

*Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked what proportion refrigerated and frozen meat bore to fresh meat in the supplies?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: About 60 per cent., or half and half. I cannot state exactly what it is; but there is a certain fixed percentage which cannot be exceeded.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government will expend what they save on this foreign meat in giving the soldiers that extra allowance of meat for which we have fought so long?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The question of the allowance of meat was very elaborately inquired into three or four years ago, and I think we had better leave it where it stands.

### TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

MR. T. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he can state why the Reid Exhibitions in Trinity College for Kerry students have not been awarded every year since 1886, the Reid prizes for Kerry monitors having been awarded annually throughout the intervening period; (2) how long part 2 of the Reid bequest scheme has been in operation; (3) to how many students the Reid Exhibitions in Trinity College have been awarded, and what is their religious persuasion; (4) whether those students were trained in the Marlborough Street Training College; (5) and whether it was on the result of their answering in this College that the Reid Exhibitions were awarded to them?

MR. J. MORLEY: (1) The Reid Exhibitions in Trinity College, Dublin, are to enable students of the County Kerry, who have successfully passed the final examination at the close of their course of training in the Marlborough Street Training College to matriculate in Trinity College and to pass on, without dropping a year, to the Arts Degree. Only two Exhibitions are available concurrently, and as the course extends over four years it would not, I am informed, be possible to award the exhibitions annually. (2) Candidates are recommended by the Professors of Marlborough Street College, and 1894 was the first year in which the Professors were able to recommend any candidate as fulfilling the conditions. (3–4) Exhibitions have been awarded to two students, one of whom is a Roman Catholic and the other a Protestant, and both were trained in the Marlborough Street College. (5) The reply to the last paragraph is in the affirmative.

### THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to an article by the right hon. Sir R. Garth, late Chief Justice of Bengal, in the last number of the *Law Magazine*, as to the value of the Indian National Congress; and whether he will state what arrangements the Government of India make to give a hearing to the annual representations of that body?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Secretary of State has not seen the article to which the hon. Member refers, and is therefore unable to give any opinion upon its contents.

### EAST BRISTOL ELECTION.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the recent declaration of the poll at the East Bristol election was inaccurate to the number of 50 votes recorded for one of the candidates, and that this mistake had to be subsequently corrected; and if he will issue a Local Government Board Order as to the counting of votes at elections to prevent or diminish inaccuraces?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I have seen a report in the newspapers to the effect that at the East Bristol election 50 spoiled voting papers were inadvertently added to the total votes of one of the candidates, but that the mistake was discovered and corrected. The Local Government Board have no power to issue any order as to the counting of votes at Parliamentary elections.

### ST. ANDREW'S INFANTS SCHOOL, LOWESTOFT.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the St. Andrew's Infants School, Lowestoft, and has reported that the marching space is sufficient, and that the school is very fairly equipped except as to some of the desks, whereas the Local Inspector had reported that the equipment was unsatisfactory, and that the marching space was insufficient, and has also recommended that the school managers were entitled to the portion of the grant withheld (£24 18s.), whether the Department has paid the managers the sum of £24 18s. so withheld; and, if not, for what reason it is still withheld; if he can state who is responsible at the Education Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down the Chief Inspector in response to the appeal of the managers; whether he has taken, or intends to take, any action with regard to Her Majesty's Inspector; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take, any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the report of the Inspector?

Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND: The additional grant referred to in the question was paid on the 10th January. No request was made by the managers for the Chief Inspector or any other Inspector to be sent, and, therefore, no such request was refused.

*Mr. H. S. FOSTER: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the question as to who is responat the Department, and whether he intends to take any action in reference to the Inspector?

Mr. ACLAND: Nobody in the Department is responsible if no appeal has been made to the Department, and no appeal refused. I answered that question practically the other day.

## THE SCOTCH FISHERY BOARD.

*Mr. J. G. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many days the *New Vigilant* has been to sea since she was purchased by the Fishery Board for Scotland early last year and converted into a cruiser; and whether she has effected the capture of any trawlers; if so, will he state when and where they were captured, their names and numbers, and the penalties imposed in each case?

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: During the 301 days the *Vigilant* has been at the disposal of the Fishery Board she has been at sea 213 days. On 12th July last she captured the trawler *Marion* S.D. 29, fishing illegally in the estuary of the Clyde, the master was fined £20 with the option of 60 days imprisonment for illegal trawling, and £5 for infringing the lettering and numbering regulations, and his net was forfeited.

## FRANCE AND CENTRAL AFRICA.

*Sir E. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any information as to the French Expedition which left the Upper Ubanghi for the Nile waterway some nine months ago?

Sir EDWARD GREY: We do not know that any French expedition has left for the Nile waterway.

## ALDERNEY.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, seeing that telegraphic communication with the Island of Alderney has now been interrupted for more than six months, the Post Office Department has made any attempt in that period to repair the broken cable; whether he is aware that, on Friday, the 22nd instant, a steamship of 2,000 tons burden was wrecked on the coast of Alderney, and that, owing to the interruption of the cable service, the crew had no means of communicating with the owners or with their friends until Sunday evening, the 24th instant, when they reached Guernsey; whether it has been reported to him that great indignation prevails in Alderney at the persistent neglect to repair the cable; and whether he will order the immediate execution of the work?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: In reply to a question asked by the hon. Member on the 11th ultimo, I explained some of the difficulties which had hindered the repair of the Alderney cable, and stated that the cable ship had unfortunately been in collision whilst actually proceeding to the work. She started again last Friday for Alderney; and now only awaits favourable weather to carry out the work.

## THE MIDLAND GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that for the last three weeks the Midland Great Western Railway Company have never had sufficient supply of wagons at Galway, though remonstrated with in the strongest terms by every trader in town; and that upon the fair day of Galway, 21st instant, there were neither wagons for goods or cattle, and the latter were injured by standing all day in the rain; and if the Government will introduce a short Bill to give senders a remedy, if, after long notice, their goods will not be carried?

MR. J. BRYCE: The circumstances referred to by the hon. and gallant Member have not been brought to my notice. If the Company do not afford reasonable facilities, the law provides a sufficient remedy. Under Section 2 of the Railway Regulation Act, 1854, and subsequent Acts (1873 and 1889), establishing and giving jurisdiction to the Railway Commission, the Railway Commissioners have power to entertain complaints by traders in respect of such a grievance.

### RATEABLE VALUE OF LONDON.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the total rateable value of London is more than one-fifth of the total rateable value of the country, and that London received in 1890–91 only one-ninth of the additional sum contributed to the relief of local rates by the readjustment of the basis of Exchequer contributions towards the expenses incurred by the local authorities; and, if this distribution still continues in the same proportion, whether the Government will take steps to remedy this state of things?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: It is the fact that the rateable value of London is slightly more than one-fifth of the rateable value of England and Wales; but it is not the fact that, in 1890–91, London received only one-ninth of the difference between the grants which were not discontinued in consequence of the passing of the Local Government Act, 1888, and the sums which were paid to local authorities out of the Local Taxation Account for 1890–91. These sums were £3,148,231 in excess of the discontinued grants, and the amount received by London in excess of the discontinued grants, was £498,748. London received, therefore, between one-sixth and one-seventh of the additional relief afforded to local taxation by the financial arrangements in question. I have no power to alter those arrangements. I may add that the population of London in 1891 was very little more than one-seventh of the population of England and Wales.

### ENGLISH MONEY IN THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the British Acts or Ordinances which give power to search, fine, or imprison the citizens of a friendly State who are suspected of entering the United Kingdom, having in their possession the lawful current money of the State to which they belong; which of such Statutes or Ordinances he relies upon as furnishing a precedent for the Boer Law by which British subjects are made liable to be searched, fined, and imprisoned for entering the Transvaal with English silver money in their possession; and whether, in view of the unfriendly character of the Boer Law referred to Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the Boer Government with a view of procuring its early repeal?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Act of the United Kingdom, to which I referred the other day, was the Customs Act of 1886, which prohibits, under Proclamation, the importation of all coins coined in any foreign country other than gold and silver coins; I also quoted somewhat similar prohibitions which have been enforced in some of the Colonies. I gave these facts in reply to the question of my hon. Friend, but specially refrained from treating them as precedents for the action of the Government of the South African Republic. We have not received any complaints in reference to the Act referred to in the Question, namely, the Mint Act of the South African Republic of 1891.

MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the Question—namely, whether it is proposed to remonstrate against Acts of this unfriendly nature, rendering British subjects liable to be searched for British coins in the Transvaal?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Act was passed in 1891, and was not protested against by the then Government. We have not thought it necessary to protest against it, inasmuch as we have not received any complaints with regard to it.

### FRENCH EXPEDITIONS IN NIGER COMPANY'S TERRITORIES.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether it is a fact, as stated by Reuter's Agency on Wednesday, that two large French Expeditions have arrived within the Niger Company's territory, or sphere, the one at Bagibo and the other at Boussa?

Sir EDWARD GREY: The Niger Company have informed us that they have received information to this effect, and a communication on the subject will be made immediately to the French Government.

### CASTLEREA AND BALLAGHADERREEN RAILWAY.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he has yet forwarded to the promoters of the Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway any reply to the answer forwarded by them to the Treasury Memorandum. The same hon. Member asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received a copy of the Resolution passed at the large meeting held in Loughglynn on Sunday last, in favour of the Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway, both as a relief work and one opening up a large district of country; whether he is aware that the engineer of the line has stated that the amount to be spent on labour in a thickly populated district would be £60,000; and, whether, with the view of providing employment during the summer, he will recommend the Treasury to grant the comparatively trifling guarantee asked for?

Colonel NOLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if a guarantee under the Tramway Act for a railroad from Ballindereen to Castlerea has been refused by the Treasury; if the sum asked for is only £600 a year; whether he is aware that an enormous number of people in the locality are in favour of this line; and, if the Midland Great Western Railway Company has offered to work the line on favourable terms?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: The answer of the promoters of the railway mentioned in the first question has been referred to the Irish Board of Works, and until the Board's Report is received, no detailed reply can be given. As the point at issue bears directly on the subject of the other questions, it might be more satisfactory if those questions were postponed for a few days.

### EXPORTED SPIRITS.

Mr. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose Burghs): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer—(1) whether a payment of 2d. per gallon is made, out of moneys raised by Imperial Taxation, to exporters of spirits manufactured in the United Kingdom; (2) whether he can state the amount so paid during the last financial year; (3) whether he will state to the House the reason for this payment, and since when it has been made; and (4) whether he will consider the propriety of the abolition of such a bounty?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): (1) The fact is as stated. (2) The amount so paid in 1893–94 was £26,011. (3) Such payment is made to compensate traders for the loss estimated to attach to this portion of their business by reason of Excise Regulations. Their claim was established to the satisfaction of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in 1860, and the allowance granted by a Resolution of this House in the same year. The reasons which led to their being granted seem to me still to exist.

### PERJURY BILL.

Mr. E. F. VESEY KNOX: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is aware that the Perjury Bill [Lords], although introduced as a Consolidating Act, creates a number of misdemeanours hitherto unknown to the law; and whether, having regard to the wide scope of the measure, he will undertake that the Second Reading shall not be taken without affording the House an opportunity for discussion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. T. Reid, Dumfries Burghs) replied, that this Bill was certainly not intended to create any misdemeanours, but inasmuch as in it there was a gathering up of something like 150 specific statutes, it was possible there might be some new misdemeanour created. He would undertake to move to strike out any part of the Bill which appeared to be controversial if the House would allow it to go through a Grand Committee.

### SCOTCH ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. J. G. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, seeing that the Secretary for Scotland receives a salary of £2,000 without residence, that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland receives a salary of £4,425 and residence, and that the salaries of the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General for Scotland have recently been augmented, it is proposed to make any alteration in the remuneration paid to the Secretary for Scotland?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have received no application from the Secretary for Scotland on the subject mentioned in the question.

MR. J. G. WEIR desired to know whether, if the Secretary for Scotland made such an application, it would be considered?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That will depend upon who, in the future, may be the Secretary for Scotland.

## NAVAL WORKS BILL.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can now state when the Naval Works Bill will be taken; and whether he can arrange to secure proper time for the discussion of proposals so important from the financial as well as the strategical point of view?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope to be able to fix a day before the Easter holidays.

MR. G. J. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) expressed the hope that it would be put down as the first Order of the Day, and treated as a Bill of considerable importance. He knew great interest was taken in it.

SIR W. HARCOURT intimated that he recognised the importance of the Bill.

## SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION AT LOWESTOFT.

*MR. H. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the Clapham Road School for Infants, Lowestoft, and has reported that he sees no reason for reducing the accommodation on the eight feet square basis, thereby allowing accommodation for 223 places to the school, whereas the local Inspector had pronounced the accommodation and the equipment, even with the most lenient judgment, as unsatisfactory, and has also recommended that the school managers were entitled to the portion of the grant withheld, £20 4s., whether the Department has paid the managers the sum of £20 4s. so withheld; and, if not, for what reason it is still withheld; if he can state who is responsible at the Education Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down the Chief Inspector in response to the appeal of the managers; whether he has taken, or intends to take, any action with regard to Her Majesty's Inspector; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take, any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the report of the Inspector?

MR. A. H. D. ACLAND: The additional grant referred to in the question was paid on the 10th of January. No appeal was made by the managers for the Chief Inspector or any other Inspector to be sent, and, therefore, no such appeal was refused.

*MR. H. FOSTER: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that a letter was sent to the Department in June, 1894, by way of an appeal against the report of the Inspector, and asking the right hon. Gentleman to receive a deputation, and that a reply was sent by the Department refusing the deputation?

MR. ACLAND: That is a different point. The question asks whether an appeal was made from the Inspector. No such appeal was made.

## THE CASE OF GEORGE NEWMAN.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether his attention has been drawn to the case of George Newman, who was found guilty of having fraudulently pocketed £10,000, this being the difference between the amount he gave for some land he leased from the Commissioners of 1851 and the amount for which he sold it to George Newman & Company (Limited), and who is now undergoing a sentence of five years' penal servitude; whether he is aware that the Lords Justices have declared that on this point he was wrongly convicted, as he had expended the bulk of the £10,000 to obtain the contract for the land from the Commissioners; that Lord Halsbury, in delivering judgment of the Court of Appeal in regard to this matter, said, that the money was spent in a process described by various polite names, but which, if facts are as he (Newman) alleges, amounts to bribing different persons, some of them named, for the purpose of obtaining this contract; and that it was perfectly manifest that, considering the circumstances of the case, and considering the mode in which the contract was obtained from the Commissioners, the matter urgently requires investigation, and in the public interest it is positively necessary that some investigation should be held in respect of the obtaining of that contract; and what steps are intended to be taken in order that this investigation shall take place?

MR. ASQUITH said, he had directed an investigation to be made as soon as the judgment of the Court of Appeal was given, and the Report which he had just received was now under consideration.

### ROYAL PATRIOTIC FUND.

MR. H. E. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury what is the cause of the delay in nominating the Committee to inquire into the Royal Patriotic Fund and other similar funds; and whether he can now state when it will be appointed?

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. THOMAS ELLIS, Merionethshire): The names will be placed upon the Paper to-night.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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## SUPPLY.

### VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

The House went into Committee of Supply.

Mr. MELLOR in the chair.

On the Vote for £4,439,258 on account of all charges for the Civil Service and Revenue Departments,

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) desired to know if anything had been done in the way of equalising the remuneration of the gardeners in the Royal Gardens at Kew with the remuneration given to similar officers in the Royal Parks in London. The other day the First Commissioner of Works said the matter was under consideration, and he desired to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had come to any conclusion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY, Sir J. T. HIBBERT (Oldham) was sorry his right hon. Friend was not present at that moment. He could say, however, that the matter was still under consideration, and it was not improbable the concession would be made, though he was not able to say definitely for the present.

*Sir A. K. ROLLIT (Islington, S.), on Vote 13, called attention to the question of the non-rating of Government property. The matter, he said, was one which he had brought before the House on a previous occasion and it was a subject deserving the serious consideration of the rating authorities in the interest of those who had to pay the contributions, not only in the Metropolis, but throughout the Country. Latterly there had been a strong contention that undue burdens of taxation were cast upon certain localities, and those who had gone into the relative contributions made on the one hand by the Government and on the other hand by private property, must feel that if the matter were thoroughly investigated it would be found that localities were subjected to burdens which, if removed, would lighten very greatly the amounts which had to be paid by the ratepayers in every parish of the Metropolis and elsewhere. Claims were frequently made for subsidies on behalf of local rates, but it was sometimes forgotten that here was available much more than any subsidy to which, as a matter of justice, the ratepayers were fairly entitled, and which, if made by the Government, would be the means of the readjustment and lightening of the pressure of local taxation. Under the present system the Government had the unique privilege of valuing its own property for rating purposes. If every Government was its own valuer, and other authorities were in a like position, he did not doubt they would equally take advantage of their privilege, and the result would be that the receipts for local rating purposes would be further materially diminished. It would be no exaggeration to say that in London alone a sum of £40,000 or £50,000 a year might be gained for the local authorities if this grievance were thoroughly rectified. Even that estimate was too low if it was borne in mind that in the calculation only the rateable value of the sites was taken into account, no addition being made for the buildings upon them. He believed the same remark might be made with reference to the provinces, and in the like proportion. There was one group of buildings in the constituency which he represented which illustrated the anomalies of the position forcibly. He found, for instance, that the County Court, Pentonville Prison and Holloway Prison, the Post Offices and Sorting Offices, the Telegraph Factory and Offices, and the Office of the Surveyor of Taxes at Islington were valued by the Government for the purpose of contribution to rates by themselves at £4,246 per annum. He did not hesitate to say that almost any two of those buildings, which would let well, being in the midst of a dense business population, might be made to make a considerably larger return. But a contrast would show how unfair the present system was. The acreage of Holloway and Pentonville Prisons was about 22 acres, the former being rated, or rather valued by the Government, at £1,250 and the latter at £1,600 a year. In the immediate neighbourhood was the Holborn Union Infirmary, which covered only one-seventh of the area, but, being subject to parochial assessment, was rated at £3,084 a year; while Islington Workhouse, having little more than half the area of Holloway Prison, had a rateable value of £2,709, and the Cornwallis Road Workhouse, covering about one-half Pentonville Prison area, was rated considerably higher. Moreover, structurally all these Government buildings were of much higher value, apart from their sites, than those which were rated so much higher. He was instructed that the Islington Vestry considered that there was room for a substantial increase in the Government contributions in respect of the buildings to which he had particularly referred. He admitted the Secretary to the Treasury was entitled to some credit for having materially improved the position, and for having, from his point of view, acted in a liberal spirit. The only observation he would make on that was, that the increase in the contributions of the Government, which had been large in some cases, only emphasised the gross magnitude of the injustice under which local authorities had previously laboured. If, as he found, there were instances in which the Government contribution had been increased by half, one-third, or even a quarter, it only showed how tolerant the local authorities had been for nearly 50 years past. He expected that the statement made on former occasions would be repeated again by the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that the Government had acted liberally to local authorities in this matter, and that they were satisfied and had not been coerced by the official argument that the Government being free of rates they ought to be thankful for whatever they might receive. Now, he had taken the trouble to communicate, within the last few days, with several of the chief local authorities in London, and he might add that he had also communicated with some in the country. In Hull, for example, there was a very strong feeling indeed that the Government did not deal fairly with local authorities in rating matters, and that the Government contributions were much too low compared with the ratings of private properties What did the local authorities in London say? He admitted, in the first place, that there were some, not many, who said that on the whole, and having regard to the circumstances, they were fairly satisfied, and that they had no strong ground of complaint. There were others who took a different position. He would not think it fair to mention the names of particular authorities, but he would quote *verbatim* from letters addressed to him. In one case it was stated—

> "The question of Police Stations is an important one. We have two—one rated at £125, the other at £84, which is only about half their market value. The Receiver of Police contends that he is entitled to entire exemption, and only assents to these ratings as an act of grace, "on the authority of cases decided;"

and so on. In another case the local authority wrote that the Vestry had accepted the rating—or, rather, the Government's own valuation—but that—

> "practically they had no option in the matter. The present very recently revised value for the Parcel Post premises is £5,500, but seeing that about nine acres of land are occupied I cannot but think that if it were in the hands of private owners it would be considerably higher."

In another case it was said :—

> "I am unable to say definitely whether the Goverment property is under-assessed to any large extent, but it is probable that, on going into the assessment of such properties as Burlington House, War Office, Geological Museum, Board of Ordnance, &c., we shall find that we have a good claim for requiring an increase in these valuations."

In another case he was informed as follows :—

> "I do not for one moment think the total amount of the assessment represents the true rateable value of the properties."

And again—

> "The Assessment Committee are not satisfied with the existing valuation of Government property settled by the Treasury itself."

And in another case—

> "We consider the Government valuations much below the real value."

These had all been received within the last few days. He drew particular attention to the following :—

> "Whereupon Mr. Griffiths, of the Treasury, called upon me and drew attention to the fact that the hereditament was not legally rateable; but the Treasury were willing to base their contribution upon hypothetical rateable value of £60 instead of £69, and in support of his valuation stated that additions cost, *pro rata*, more money than if they were carried out as part of the original work, and he considered his value a fair one upon the whole building. My Overseers felt they had no option but to reduce the figures, which they did; but I cannot disguise the fact that had this been private property we could have maintained our figures before the Committee."

One of the most important Vestries in London wrote :

> "The Vestry do not consider that the contribution from the Treasury, in respect of Government property in this parish, a just one."

He had many more which he would not trouble to read, but their general tenour was of the same character. He thought he had shown that a large amount of property in the various local authorities was undervalued—in the case of Islington he thought he had shown it was very considerably so—contrasting either the structural value of the property, or their area, or their possible letting value. He ventured also to say he had met by anticipation the usual official argument addressed to the House on these occasions, that the Government was disposed to deal not only fairly, but liberally, in this matter, and had shown some grounds, at any rate, for thinking that the right hon. Gentleman was misinformed when he stated that his officials did not hold over the heads of the Vestries the very forcible but, he thought, very unjust argument that they were not liable to be rated at all, and whatever the Government chose to offer ought, therefore, to be gratefully accepted. He hoped there would be not only a renewal of the assurances of the past, but also the expression of a determination to deal with this matter on a really fair and equitable footing, and he conceived that footing could only be, that property belonging to the Government should bear its fair and an equal share of local taxation, for any other principle was a differential taxation of the localities in favour of the whole community, whereas, if there were any such difference, it ought to be in favour of each of the localities as against the State as a whole. But what he asked for was a just and equal assessment of local taxation. He moved to reduce the Vote by £500.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, it was undoubtedly now admitted by the Government that something ought to be done. The present moment was a very important one for London, for the Quinquennial Valuation was about to take place, and, therefore, the Committees and the Overseers would be considering the whole question. He was aware, personally, and certainly up to the present time, that the Government Valuer had dealt with the Overseers in a very high-handed manner. He had, practically, said :

> "You must take what we offer you or you will get nothing, because we are not bound to pay any rates at all on Government buildings."

If they went back to 1874, when this question was raised, we found there was a Treasury Minute which stated distinctly that Government buildings were to be assessed in the same manner as adjoining buildings, and as near as possible to the same value. The Government had admitted by the recent increases they had allowed, that those buildings had been under-assessed, and he wanted to know why the Government should take up this position at all, that it was an act of grace on their part to allow the buildings to be assessed? Why should they not allow these buildings to be assessed by the local authorities just the same as Board Schools and other public buildings were assessed, and then, if they were not satisfied with the work of the local authorities, let them appear before the Assessment Committees and object? That was the only way of finally settling the question. The gentlemen generally employed by the Government seemed to know nothing about the assessment of buildings and did not take into consideration points that the Overseers and Assessment Committees would in assessing similar buildings. He hoped the Government would frankly adopt the course of allowing these buildings to be assessed by the local authorities, for he did not think there was likely to be any injustice done. At the present moment there was a great injustice, because the Government buildings were not fairly distributed over all the parishes; otherwise it might be said it came out all right in the end. As a matter of fact, the Government buildings were placed a great deal more in one parish than another, and, therefore, a particular parish suffered because somebody else had to make up what the Government did not pay.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he thought this was essentially, or at least very largely, a London question, though no doubt it affected other parts of the country. He believed the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had acted very fairly under the representations of the Vestries, but would it be credited that, until very recently, the House of Commons was not rated as high as was the Westminster Palace, and this in spite of the fact that the Westminster Vestry had to pay their quota of the police outside the building, and that the fire brigade charges had to be paid out of the central fund. When one looked at the question one asked oneself how it was that London had not received fair treatment in this matter. The theory was that it was impossible that Government property should be rated like any other property. He failed to see how that should be the case. The local authorities were able to assess town halls, schools, libraries, and police courts, and why they could not assess the rating value of Government buildings appeared to him to be perfectly incomprehensible. They had also been told that the local authorities of London and the country had never made any complaints regarding the contributions they received from the Government. Probably they had not done very much until recently, but as the result of the action of the Westminster Vestry he believed there had grown up a very strong feeling in the other parishes of London. He admitted the right hon. gentleman had done his best to meet them, and to see whether he could not give them some more equitable assessment of their various properties.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked, on a point of Order, whether this discussion arose on Vote 8 or Vote 13? If on Vote 13, then he desired to ask a question on Vote 8.

The CHAIRMAN said he was about to call attention to the fact that this was a little irregular. It arose on Vote 13, and the Amendment had better be withdrawn for the present and brought up a little later.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES said. he desired to ask, on Vote 8, a question with regard to certain lighthouses abroad, which were maintained under the authority of, and indeed by, the Board of Trade. On a previous occasion he called attention to this matter, and pointed out that many of these lighthouses were in a defective and improper condition, inasmuch as the lights were irregular in their intervals. His information with regard to the lighthouses was drawn from the Admiralty Book on lighthouses, which was issued every year, and in which there was a detailed report of each lighthouse. The lighthouse on Sombrero Island and various other lighthouses in the West Indies were reported to be irregular. The irregularities of these lights were very misleading, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he could assure the House that all the lights brought under his jurisdiction were working satisfactorily and at proper intervals.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, he was sorry notice had not been given of the question so that he might have brought the *data* with him. He could not answer the hon. Member at present. He remembered that when the Estimates were coming on last August he had satisfied himself that the condition of these lighthouses were satisfactory.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, he had referred particularly to the light on Falkland Islands, but he would not press the question.

MR. J. BRYCE said, if the hon. Member would give him notice of the question he would endeavour to obtain the information.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.), on Vote 12, called attention to an item of £23,000 for the improvement of Peterhead Harbour. He did not see why an Irish harbour should not be assisted as well as a Scotch harbour.

*MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) pointed out that this work, according to the Estimates, would be going on for something like 20 years. Since last year the Vote had been considerably reduced, and he should like to know if that was in consequence of the abandonment of part of the intended works, or whether there had been any reconsideration of he scheme.

MR. J. BRYCE said, the harbour had been, to some extent, modified from time to time. Efforts had been made to effect economy in the works, and the matter had been under cousideration lately. It was now going on satisfactorily.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked when the harbour would be finished.

MR. J. BRYCE said, he could not say.

*MR. TOMLINSON asked if the Government had taken any steps to reconsider the scheme.

MR. J. BRYCE said, the subject had been before them, and certain parts of the work originally intended were not now to be carried out.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that a sum appeared under the head of Purchase of Land and Works, and asked if it was proposed to purchase any more land?

MR. BRYCE said, his hon. Friend, the Secretary to the Admiralty, did not seem to be in the House. He was not aware that there was any intention of purchasing any more land.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the present estimate of the engineers for the completion of Peterhead Harbour was £737,000, and he would like to learn on the authority of the Secretary to the Treasury if that was all that would be required?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said it was a matter under the control of the Admiralty. So far as they knew, the estimate of £737,000 was the estimate of the total cost, but it was impossible to say whether that would be sufficient.

MR. R. W. HANBURY (Preston) commented on the absence of the Secretary to the Admiralty. Although his right hon. Friend had given all the information in his power, he thought it was only right that the Government should be fairly represented on the Treasury Bench. This was the second occasion within the last few minutes on which, when important questions had been asked on that side of the House, they had received the reply that the Minister was not present. The ordinary course, on occasions of that kind when a Department was not properly represented, was to move to report progress, and they should undoubtedly take that course if, when important questions were brought before the House, there was only the indefatigable Secretary to the Treasury to represent the Government.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT thought there was some excuse for the absence of hon. Members of the Government, as no notice had been given that these questions would be brought forward.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, they would not have another occasion on which to discuss these subjects, and unless Ministers were sent for they would have to report progress that evening.

*MR. A. C. MORTON desired to join in the protest. He asked if the Admiralty had the control at Peterhead, appointed officers, and superintended the work?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said that was so. He pointed out that the matter might be discussed on the Report.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) complaining that no one representing the Admiralty was present on the Treasury Bench to answer the questions of hon. Members, moved on that ground that progress be reported.

The CHAIRMAN declined to allow the Motion.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY said, that until a representative of the Admiralty arrived, he wished to refer to convict labour at Peterhead Harbour. From the Estimates it appeared that about £750,000 was to be spent on the harbour. He wished to know what saving would result from the employment of convict labour; whether more convicts were being employed and what was the progress of the work? Ten years had passed since it was commenced.

Mr. J. BRYCE explained that the harbour works were not under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade. But, as regards convict labour, a Commission had been investigating the whole subject of prisons and prison labour. He believed that a very valuable result had been arrived at by the Commission. Its Report was nearly ready. That Report would probably gratify the laudable curiosity of the hon. Member on the points he had raised.

*Mr. TOMLINSON, seeing that the Civil Lord was now present, pursued the subject of Peterhead Harbour. It had been promised last year that the engineers should be consulted as to the order in which the work should be done, and whether one part should be accelerated and the other delayed. He wished to know the result of the consultation.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) admitted promising last year that the question of accelerating the works should be considered. The Director of the works had consulted with the engineers, Messrs. Coode and Matthews, and they stated that more rapid progress could not be made. As to one part of the work being delayed and the other accelerated, they advised that the course taken should be continued.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER, reverting to the question of London rating, expressed indebtedness to the hon. Member who had raised it. The London County Council estimated that London lost £40,000 a year by the present arrangement; another authority put the sum at £87,000. When the House was trying to equalise the rates in London they merely proposed to take money from one pocket and put it into another. But under the arrangement he had referred to it was proposed to take money from the Imperial Exchequer in aid of the London rates. Government buildings in London were used in the interest of the whole country, and the whole country should contribute towards the rating of them. London had not had fair play in this and other directions. While thanking the Secretary to the Treasury for the action he had taken, he wished to know what steps he proposed taking in the future?

Sir R. E. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, those who had studied the question of London rating were staggered last year by the figures that were given as to the extraordinary low rating of some of the Government buildings in London—Somerset House, for example. The subject should now be considered, for they were entering upon a fresh valuation, and owners of private property were being rated to the full amount. There had recently been the case of the Imperial Institute. Many might think that justice was meted out hardly to that Institute. Be that as it might, there they had a *quasi* public institution rated at a high figure, to which the figures given last year had no comparison. He did not say that the Imperial Institute should not pay its proper *quota* to the rating of the Metropolis, but if similar institutions were to be treated in the same way it behoved the House to see that Government buildings bore their proper rating value. It was not fair that individual ratepayers in London should bear larger burdens than they ought because the State—which meant the ratepayers all over the country—got off cheaply for the reason that public buildings—where work in which the whole country was interested was done — did not pay their fair share. The matter was very pressing last year, and it was still more so this year, because people's rates were being put up, and he therefore hoped they would have a full and satisfactory statement from the Secretary to the Treasury.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, he wished to state the case of the local authorities at Waltham Abbey in respect of the Government gunpowder factories there. If London has a grievance, there was a still greater one in connection with these factories. He would confine himself to figures supplied to him by local residents, who felt keenly the pressure upon the rates. The site of the Clifdon Hill factory, the scene of the last explosion, was bought in 1889. Since then there had been erected upon it a large building which was filled with machinery, and yet the contributions in aid was still based upon the same valuation as at first, which was the price given for the site as agricultural land. In the meantime the rates had been largely increased from various causes, including the action of the Government itself, for some of the widows and children of the sufferers by explosions are chargeable to the rates. Then the School Board rate has risen, greatly from the necessity of finding school accommodation for the children of the workmen employed in the factories. Expensive machinery had been put into the Waltham Holy Cross, and yet since 1888 the contributions in aid had been diminished. A large number of good middle-class houses had been built, but occupants had been frightened away by explosions, and many houses are now empty. The rates at Waltham Abbey had risen from 2s. to 3s. 4d. in the £, and a farmer who was rated at £700, said the difference to him amounted to between £46 and £48 a year. This was serious when coupled with the agricultural distress in Essex. He was sure the Secretary of the Treasury would see that the case deserved more attention than had been given to it. The new District Council had presented a petition in which they said the contribution in aid of accounts of the various factories were £5,000 now, compared with £5,769 in 1888, although in the interval there had been enormous additions to the buildings, and the Government had refused an application to have a re-valuation made by an independent firm of valuers. In 1871, the capital value of the factories was £310,000, and since then enormous additions had been made, including a residence for the Superintendent, in respect of which not a farthing was paid. Altogether the Government paid about £5,000 in aid of rates, when a private firm would have to pay very much more in rates, and owing to the difference in income thus produced, the District Council was prevented from undertaking improvements they were anxious to carry out. It might be said that the town of Waltham benefited by the factories, but the neighbouring farmers did not benefit, because labourers were taken away from them by the superior attractions of being blown up and getting higher wages, and there was often great difficulty in obtaining labourers.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said he had not the least fault to find with the hon. Member who had raised this question. He was perfectly justified in raising it, and had done it in a fair and moderate manner. To show that the question had not been lost sight of by the Treasury, he need only mention that the increased charge on the Estimates this year for rates on Government property was no less than £48,000, and that was exclusive of increased charges that were in the process of discussion between the Treasury and local authorities, not only in London, but in other parts of the country. In 1887, the Contributions amounted to £226,105, and this year the total amount was £315,105. These figures showed that considerable additions were made from time to time. In discussing the figures, he did not think it was expedient to speak of so much being lost by London or any other place. It was better to look at the matter in a plain and simple way, and to consider whether Government property in any parish or union was paying its fair quota to the rates levied upon other property in the district. He entirely agreed with those who said that Government property ought to bear its fair share, and, so far as he was concerned, his influence had been used since the question was discussed last year on the line of bringing, as far as possible, the local authorities in touch with the Treasury Valuer, with the view of ascertaining whether it was right that in any case the valuation adopted should be increased. No doubt some of the properties had not been valued for a great number of years. He did not know whether that was the case at Waltham, but he could promise that the same mode of dealing with Government property that had been adopted in London during the past year should be carried out at Waltham. He was not able to deal with the figures that had been given, but he would say that a strong case had been made out for reconsideration, and for sympathetic reconsideration. The hon. Member for Islington said that workhouses were rated higher than Government property, and if that was the case it was a matter for consideration. He did not know whether the Vestries or the local authorities in any district had made application for a revision of the valuations, or whether they were paid. Sir A. K. Rollitt said such applications had been made. He was sure that if they were made they would get every consideration. He admitted that there would be an injustice of some magnitude if these properties were not valued fairly and equally with other property of the same character. He could not go back for 50 years, because it was only in 1874 that the Government consented to give grants in aid. He would now state what had been done since this question was discussed in Committee last year. In view of the approach of the quinquennial valuation, he thought that the different authorities had a fair right to bring up the question of the valuation of Government property. The first to communicate with the Treasury were the parishes of St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, who had a vast amount of Government property in their district. Their representations were carefully considered and a revised valuation had been settled with which they were perfectly satisfied. In a communication received from them it was stated that it was a fair and just valuation, and that they had pleasure in signifying their unqualified satisfaction with it. Then other representations had been made by the following assessment committees and parishes in London: the Strand Union (comprising the parishes of St. Clement Danes, St. John the Baptist, Savoy, St. Mary-le-Strand, St. Paul's Covent Garden, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the Liberty of the Rolls), the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury; the parish of Plumstead (Woolwich). He might add that the Vestry of the last-mentioned parish had made application not only to have a revision of the amount of valuation, put they also asked that some impartial gentleman should be employed to look into the matter. Then the Assessment Committee of the City of London Union, the Vestry of the parish of St. George's Hanover Square, the Vestry of the parish of Marylebone, the Vestry of the parish of St. Andrew Holborn; the Vestry of the parish of St. Luke Middlesex; and also the Overseers of the parish of Wandsworth had all made representations to the Treasury, which were now being considered. He would deal with one authority, the Assessment Committee of the Strand Union, who had a large interest in the question in Somerset House and other Government property. A communication from this body was to the effect that—having regard to the statement of the Treasury valuer that the revisions made would be carefully considered, and would be submitted to the necessary authorities before any definite conclusion was come to—the committee considered the course taken by the Treasury satisfactory. This was a very important case, and had been under the consideration of the Treasury valuer in conjunction with the Assessment Committee, and he was happy to say that a satisfactory settlement had been come to. He was told that at a conference which had taken place between the valuer and the representatives of the Assessment Committee, a resolution was agreed to in which was declared that, in their judgment, a fair settlement had been made. He only mentioned that to show that the Treasury were going forward, and he hoped hon. Members would be satisfied when he said that similar measures would be adopted with regard to other Government property in the Metropolis. But the same question arose in the country; and there, too, the Treasury were carrying out the same principle. They did not want to throw money away, but they did want to satisfy the local authorities and local justice in this matter. He did not think he need say more than to assure the Committee that the valuations of Government property should be very carefully watched and that the Treasury would try to give satisfaction to the different local authorities in the country.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) quite admitted that the statement, which the right hon. Gentleman had just made with his usual fulness and courtesy, would be very satisfactory to many of the authorities in the country. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman's statement constituted a considerable advance and showed that the Government was approximating to a fair valuation of Government property in the Metropolis. Notwithstanding all this, however, he could assure the Government that the Ratepayers of London would never be satisfied in regard to the rating of Government property in the Metropolis so long as the present system continued. The rating authority in London had to determine a ratable value of no less than £33,000,000 sterling annually. Why should Government property within the jurisdiction of that authority be taken out of their hands? Why should not Government property be rated by the same authority as other property? If that authority was competent to impose such a great amount of taxation by determining the ratable value of London, why was it not competent to determine the ratable value of Government buildings? The present system constituted a great injustice to the ratepayers. They could not understand why the Government was to be a judge in its own case. It made the ratepayers of London feel that they were bearing more than their fair share, and that it was all due to the Government setting up an exceptional and abnormal authority. He quite acknowledged the excellent and ample manner in which the Secretary to the Treasury always answered, and the satisfactory nature of the reply he had just given; and he only hoped that the advance now promised would be perpetuated. Year after year this question would be raised from his side of the House until the Government should be good enough to establish a uniform, equitable, and equal system for the valuation of all ratable property in the Metropolis.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness) said it was all very fine for London Members year after year to insist on levying a higher portion of the rates on Government property, but it meant an increase in taxation in the country.

SIR R. TEMPLE: I am not a London Member.

DR. MACGREGOR said that the provincial ratepayers helped to keep up Hyde Park and the Museums and Picture Galleries of London. In Scotland they had to keep up their own parks; and why should they help to keep up public buildings in London? He thought the right hon. Gentleman was making a mistake in promising a reconsideration of the matter.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) reminded the hon. Member that this was not at all a question between London and the Provinces, and he thought that fact was indicated by the circumstance that two Members, representing country constituencies had spoken on the question, and taken the same side as the London Members. The hon. Member was mistaken in supposing that all Government property was situated in London. The provinces were equally interested with London in pressing this question on the attention of the Treasury. When this subject was last before them it was stated that the Westminster Vestry was satisfied with the assessment of the Government property within the district. He doubted that; but, at any rate, the right hon. Gentleman had now informed them that a very considerable increase had been made in the assessment. The figures were significant. The result of this appeal to the Treasury by Westminster had been to raise the assessment of Government property from £53,000 to £89,000, and to increase the Government's contribution to the rates to the amount of £9,000. All London was interested in the Westminster case, because, if the property in any particular parish was under-assessed it affected the whole of London. The result of the appeal in the Westminster case was highly significant of the present under-assessment of Government property generally throughout the Metropolis, and these figures more than justified the statement made a short time ago by the Valuer for the London County Council that upon the whole, Government property in London was under-assessed by 50 per cent. at least. They had heard some satisfactory statements from the right hon. Gentleman that evening. The right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged that this demand on the part of the Vestries was a demand which they were entitled to make, and that it rested upon the highest authority short of statutory authority — namely, an engagement entered into with that House. If, then, it was conceded that Government property ought to pay a due share of local burdens the most simple and natural method they could adopt for assessing Government property was the use of the same assessment machinery as was applied to the neighbouring private property. There was only one possible objection to this. If a private owner thought that he had been unjustly treated by an Assessment Committee he could appeal to a Court of Law, and have his case decided there. It would not be open, however, to the Government to appeal to a Court of Law, because in law Government property was not assessable, and therefore the Court would hold that it had no jurisdiction in the matter. But this legal difficulty could be got over by passing a short Bill or introducing a clause in a Bill in order to make this Government property legally assessable. Then the Government would have no reason to complain, and would be placed in the same position as their private neighbours.

Mr. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) did not think that the Strand District Board was quite as well satisfied as the right hon. Member had led the Committee to believe. Its views had been met to a considerable extent, he admitted, but there still remained a large amount of Government property within the limits of the Strand District Board, which it was thought was under-assessed. To a parish which had been so hardly treated in the past, it was of the utmost importance that adequate relief should be given in the future. He trusted that a short Bill would be introduced for the purpose of putting Government property in respect of valuation on the same footing as private property.

*Sir ARTHUR HAYTER (Walsall) asked for information as to the property of the War Department, which was to contribute so largely to the rates. Out of a sum of £48,000, £28,000 was to be the contribution in aid of the rates in London, leaving £20,000 as the contribution from the War Department in aid of rates elsewhere. Was this contribution in respect of new buildings or the increased values of old buildings?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT replied that the increased contribution was due partly to the erection of new barracks and partly to increased values.

*Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, that the State was charged with £3,300 gross for the payment of the rates of houses occupied by the representatives of Foreign Powers. Some of the foreign representatives, however, repaid £1,450 for these rates, so that the sum which the people of this country were called upon to pay was reduced to something under £2,000. He was of opinion that all the representatives of foreign Powers ought to pay the rates in respect of their houses. That they had not to do so was greatly due to the fiction that the premises occupied by a Foreign Ambassador were extra-territorial. But it was monstrous that the taxpayers should have to pay £2,000 a year in discharge of the rates of gentlemen who came over here to promote the interests of their own countries as against our interests. But if this charge must be made it ought to be included in the Foreign Office Vote, as it was a subsidy to the Foreign Embassies. He wished to know who were the Ambassadors for whom this money was paid. He agreed with the hon. Baronet the Member for Kingston that, in respect of rating, the Government ought to put themselves under the ordinary rules. The Government ought to pay their fair share of local rates, and the assessment of their property ought to be made in the usual way. If the Government were to submit to the existing rules of rating there would be no further need for the Treasury Valuer and Inspector of Rates, who cost the country £1,200 a year. Why should it be supposed that local authorities would rate Government property less fairly than they rated private property? The only solution of this question was, that the Government should give up their pretension to occupy a particular position in connection with rating.

*Mr. H. L. W. LAWSON (Gloucestershire, Cirencester) said, that the question of rating Government property had now been narrowed down to a very small issue. It was clear that the Government had adopted the principle that Government property ought to contribute to local burdens equally with other property. The only point now left was whether the right hon. Member could give a pledge to introduce a Bill for the purpose of submitting Government property to the ordinary tribunal of assessment. The question was, whether the Government could allow the Assessment Committees to do what they liked with respect to the valuation of Government buildings. The hon. Member for King's Lynn asked why it should not be treated exactly as other property was treated? He would tell the hon. Member why. In the case of other property there was an appeal to the Courts of Law, whilst in the case of Government property there was no such appeal. The Government could only be given a right to appeal by Act of Parliament, and it would not be possible, he thought, to adopt that course in respect of the property of the Crown for one purpose only. He did not believe that the Treasury would agree that the Crown should be placed in the position contemplated by those who advocated the introduction of the Bill. But there being no right of appeal, the Government had not the protection given to ordinary occupiers. If Assessment Committees assessed the property of the Government unfairly, the Government could not go to law. What could be done was to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to extend the application of the principle on which he had acted, and to allow Government property to be treated just as if it were in the hands of private individuals. They could not go further and ask for a Bill drawn on exceptional lines. If they obtained a pledge from the right hon. Member to the effect which he had indicated they ought to be satisfied. No one had objected more strongly than he did to the system of exemption that prevailed formerly, but that had now been changed. If the Government continued in the course which they had now begun, and if they would give further opportunities to local authorities to make their wishes known, he should be satisfied, and he did not believe that the hon. Member for Islington would ask for anything more.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON did not agree with his hon. Friend. All that was asked was, that the Government should put themselves in the same position as other people. It had been said that the Government was not represented on the Assessment Committees. In London they sent their Surveyors of Taxes to these Committees, and they could take a similar course in other places. One of the difficulties at present was the dictatorial tone adopted by the Government Valuator. He would ask his right hon. Friend to allow an appeal from this official to the Treasury, so that local authorities would know what to do if they were not satisfied with his valuation.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY said, they had not got beyond the old method of dealing with this matter by an arrangement by which the local authorities were still at the mercy of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman represented that these authorities were satisfied, but they were not. [Sir J. Hibbert: "I have it in black and white."] Of course they were extremely grateful for the increased amount they received, but what they desired was that Government property should be assessed in the same way as private property. That was the only way of settling the question.

Mr. R. W. HANBURY fully agreed that the only way of solving the difficulty was by putting the Government in exactly the same position as anyone else, but if they adopted that principle with regard to rating, they must carry it a great deal further. They would have to put people employed in Government factories in exactly the same position towards the Government as they would be in regard to a private employer. With regard to health and the protection of life they ought to have exactly the same rights against the Government as against the private employer. This proposal, therefore, was only a step towards sweeping away privileges and rights which the Government, by a mere fiction, maintained. He would support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote in order to drive in the thin edge of the wedge, believing that if the principle was conceded with regard to the ratepayers, the workpeople would also press their claims.

*Sir A. K. ROLLIT (Islington, S.), disclaimed any idea of distinguishing as between London and the Provinces in this matter. They had not only had assurances from the Government from time to time, and now a renewal of them, but the hon. Gentleman had done a great deal in giving practical application to the principle he had laid down, and in the belief that the right hon. Gentleman meant to carry out that principle as completely as possible, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment. The hon. Member for King's Lynn said there was no Government property there—but had not King's Lynn a Custom-house, an Inland Revenue Office, and Post and Telegraph Offices? It had, therefore, an interest in this matter.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, in answer to the hon. Member for Peterborough, that there was an appeal now. The Government Valuer did nothing without the approval and confirmation of the Treasury, but he would consider whether the hon. Member's suggestion could be carried out.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: That is to say that local authorities, if they are not satisfied with the valuation of the Government Valuator, can appeal to the Treasury.

Leave to withdraw the Amendment was refused.

The Committee divided:—Noes, 107; Ayes, 192.—(Division List No. 36.)

Colonel NOLAN called attention to the entries in the Vote as to arterial drainage and the sink drainage, with no money after them. Was it a case like the chapter on snakes in Iceland?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT was understood to say that the items were entered formally, the matter being dealt with elsewhere.

Mr. FIELD asked whether, when dealing with arterial drainage, the Treasury would take into consideration the Barrow drainage?

Colonel NOLAN said, there was a conflict between two railway companies—the Waterford and Limerick Railway and the Midland and Great Western Railway—at Claremorris. The two companies met in this small but charming town. There was, however, no connection, and there were two stations. He thought that some attempt should be made to remedy this state of affairs. He regretted the President of the Board of Trade was not present.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, he quite saw the annoyance that was caused. He hoped there would be some chance of success if the Board of Trade tendered its service.

Colonel NOLAN asked whether the whole of the money with reference to the Galway and Clifden line had been paid, and when the line would be completed? He hoped that the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to give the information. He also pointed out that £50,000 was expended each year on the railroad in Connemara, instituted by the present Leader of the Opposition. This line had done a great deal of good, but he understood that now, in this time of distress, the workmen would be discharged. He wished to know what was being done in connection with this line, or whether an effort would be made to provide some other work for these men so as to soften the hardships which would result to them from a sudden stoppage of work.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, there was not much chance of the line being opened the whole way before the end of this year. They were very anxious to see the line opened as quickly as possible, and probably he might be able to give more definite information when the Vote was reached in Supply.

Colonel NOLAN wanted to know whether the information just given was guess work or whether it was based on fact. Could the right hon. Gentleman say whether the work would go on until next January?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, he had nothing to do with the relief works in Ireland; these belonged to the Department of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. W. FIELD asked for information with reference to Kingstown Harbour and Docks.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said he answered a question of the hon. Member on the subject three weeks ago. He then stated that the Treasury had considered the case of the men, and it was thought that some case had been made out for granting some gratuities to those who had earned them in connection with this work.

MR. W. FIELD: But what is the position of affairs at the present time?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, that a certain number of workmen were entitled to gratuities—those who had been engaged for 15 years—according to the number of years they had served. A few additional workmen had been discharged in whose case it was doubtful whether they were entitled to gratuities; but on further consideration, the Treasury decided that gratuities might be given to them.

MR. W. FIELD: Am I to understand that favourable consideration would be given to the further cases I have brought forward?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT: Favourable consideration has been given.

*ADMIRAL FIELD rose to move a reduction of £100 in the salary of the Home Secretary, in order to call attention to a grievance in connection with the Inspectorships of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. He regretted to have to take this course, because he had reason to be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his kind and conciliatory answers which had been given to questions affecting grievances in connection with the inspection of reformatory and industrial shool ships. His present grievance, however, was a very serious one, though he was bound to admit that he had obtained more in the way of reform from the present Home Secretary than he had obtained during the tenure of office of the late Government. There had been a vacancy in the Department of Inspectorships of reformatory and industrial schools. A very important officer had recently retired. In past times the office had been filled by good men; and when the vacancy occurred he thought it was a grand opportunity for the right hon. Gentleman to show his interest in the subjects to which he had drawn his attention by appointing, if possible, a Naval Officer eminently qualified for the post, thoroughly master of the whole question, and familiar with the duties of the office. If the right hon. Gentleman had taken this step he would have conferred a public benefit; but it seemed to him that no one cared two straws about the manning of the Mercantile Marine. Here was an opportunity to do good in this direction by appointing a Naval Officer to look after these ships, but instead of appointing a competent man, at least from his point of view, to this important office—a Naval Officer or an Officer connected with the Education Department—the Home Secretary had appointed a chief clerk out of the Home Office. No doubt the gentleman so appointed was an able officer in his own Department, but he could not be said to possess the qualifications necessary for the post of Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. It was well known that many of the Committees in charge of the reformatory and industrial school ships had behaved in an extraordinary way in connection with some of the appointments to them, and he thought the occasion which had arisen was a fitting one for the right hon. Gentleman to have done something to lessen the scandals in connection with them. One man might be as good as another in mental qualifications, but one man was not as good as another for the inspection of semi-penal establishments. There were now 80,000, seamen properly so-called, in the Mercantile Marine, and of this number 27,000 were foreigners. If that state of things was to continue he should like to know upon what the Navy was going to depend in time of war? There were eleven training ships, and £60,000 a year was paid over to them; £300,000 was spent on the Reformatory and Industrial School System. He advocated the affiliation of those ships to the land schools. By the present system, which was most wasteful, we turned out and sent to sea barely 400 boys a year, whereas the ships were capable of turning out 2,000. The gentleman appointed by the right hon. Gentleman was no doubt an excellent man, but he could know nothing about the inspection of schools or of ships. The matter was of great importance from an Imperial point of view, but he could not get anyone to look at it from a Naval standpoint. Every one wanted to get men for the Navy, but they would not take the trouble to improve the men of the Mercantile Marine, on which the country would have to lean in time of war. He begged to move to reduce the Vote by £100.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) was obliged to the hon. and gallant Gentleman for the tribute he paid to him, but he thought the hon. and gallant Gentleman was a very ungrateful man, and he would not encourage him to go on making concessions to his demand. He had put forward a most extraordinary demand. Because there happened to be amongst the industrial and reformatory schools of the country eight or ten training ships—very valuable institutions indeed, but still constituting an insignificant fraction of the total number of reformatory and industrial schools—he complained that he (Mr. Asquith) had not appointed a Naval man to supervise all the schools. He did not think he would have exercised his duty properly if he had done anything of the kind. He had provided what had never taken place before, namely, a Naval inspection of the ships. Every ship was in charge of a competent Captain, and hon. Members would remember that in the case of the Liverpool training ship he had insisted on the reinstatement of the Captain even at the cost of a loss of the Government grant. He would continue to use every legitimate means in his power to promote the efficiency of the ships, and to see they were carefully and properly inspected. But when he had to appoint a gentleman to the chief inspectorship of all the schools of the country he must look to a wider range of qualification than the hon. and gallant gentleman seemed to contemplate. He chose the man who, after a most careful consideration of the claims of all the candidates, he believed best fitted for the multifarious duties of that very responsible position. He believed he could not have selected a man more fitted for that special duty.

CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, the right hon. Gentleman omitted to say anything about that part of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech in which he pressed so urgently, as he had so urgently pressed before, for something in the nature of an affiliation between the industrial schools and industrial ships. On more than one occasion his hon. and gallant Friend had pointed out how extremely advantageous to the nation it would be to weed out from the industrial ships the boys unsuited for sea life, and permit their place to be filled by strong and robust boys, who might turn out admirable sailors.

MR. J. L. WHARTON (York, W.R., Ripon) desired to confirm what the right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to the appointment he had made. When he was sitting on a Departmental Committee at the Home Office, the gentleman in question acted as Secretary to the Committee. Judging from the ability the gentleman displayed, and from his courteous demeanour, he was convinced he was well fitted for the post the right hon. Gentleman had appointed him to. The gallant Admiral spoke of the semi-penal character of the industrial institutions. Industrial schools were institutions where boys who were not convicted were trained. They were boys taken on the threshold of crime, and who were brought up, he hoped, as good and useful citizens. No doubt it would be a very good thing to weed out all the strong and healthy boys and those who showed a desire to go to sea, and send them to the training ships. He was delighted to hear the Home Secretary say he had provided for the inspection of the training ships by properly constituted officials.

MR. ASQUITH said, he quite recognised the importance of the question of affiliation, or at least a closer mutual relation between industrial schools and industrial ships, and that, together with a number of other questions connected with the management of reformatory and industrial schools, was about to be submitted to the consideration of a Departmental Committee.

*ADMIRAL FIELD was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his conciliatory reply. With regard to the phrase semi-penal, he did not mean to apply it to industrial schools, but only to reformatory schools and reformatory ships. As to the training ships forming an insignificant portion of the industrial institutions of the country, he had only to say that if the industrial ships were used to their full complement, it would be found that instead of £60,000, £120,000 or more would be required to be spent upon them. He asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

MR. C. B. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, what the Home Secretary had told the Committee was only in fulfilment of a promise made two years ago by the present First Commissioner of Works (Mr. H. Gladstone). The right hon. Gentleman said, he had made arrangements for what might be called the Naval inspection of these Naval Industrial Schools. He should be glad to know of what the inspection consisted. The statement made two years ago was to the effect that the Admiralty should lend an Inspector engaged in inspecting their own training ships, and that that would, somehow, be an economical arrangement. On the general question, it was hardly fair to expect that these Naval training ships should provide the same proportion of boys for the training ships in the Admiralty, because they were a class less physically fit for the Service to start with, and because there was considerable opposition amongst parents to their boys being sent into the Mercantile Marine without their consent. Personally, he was convinced that that result would not be very much furthered by the appointment of Naval Inspectors. These ships were now officered and captained by Naval men, and therefore all that could be got by Naval skill was already present on their management.

*MR W. CROSFIELD (Lincoln) said, the hon. and gallant Admiral spoke of the capacity of the industrial training ships to hold a larger number of boys. Those who had experience of training ships knew that many boys, who supposed they had a disposition to follow the sea, as it was called, were sent to training ships, but on examination they were found to be physically incapable of discharging the duties of sailors, and consequently had to be eliminated, and to revert to land occupations. Therefore, the argument of the hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne was hardly to the point.

*ADMIRAL FIELD said, the hon. Gentleman had misunderstood his point, which was that the captain of a training ship should be allowed to send back to land schools boys who were found to be unfit for the sea.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR R. E. WEBSTER desired to bring under the notice of the Home Secretary a very important matter, to which his attention had been drawn by the civil guards and male nurses of Parkhurst Prison, Isle of Wight, and which had given rise to considerable complaints amongst officials holding those positions in all the prisons. That was, that the assistant warders got 14 days' leave of absence, while male nurses and civil guards, whose position in the service in regard to pay and hours of duty were identical, got only 11 days. It was impossible for him to understand why such a distinction should be drawn between those officials. On inquiring of the Home Office for an explanation of the distinction, he was informed that the extra three days were given to the assistant warders in consequence of the very slow promotion open to them. He could not see any relation between these two things; but, in any case, he was told by the civil guards and the nurses that their promotion was quite as slow, if not slower, than the promotion of the assistant warders. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would remove this invidious distinction, which was giving great dissatisfaction to a very deserving class of prison officials.

MR. ASQUITH said, the whole question of the position of the prison officials referred to was most carefully investigated as late as 1891 by the Prisons Committee, and the arrangements now in operation were those recommended by that Committee. To touch one point meant to touch every point of the prison service. If this concession of three days' extra holiday were given in the case of the officials of the Parkhurst Prison, referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman, he had no doubt he would have a similar application in respect to other officials, from every other hon. Member who had a prison establishment in his constituency, and he did not know how he could well refuse it. He must, therefore, look at the matter from the point of view of the service as a whole; and if he found, on investigation, that it was possible, without establishing an invidious distinction between one class of officer and another, to place a particular class of officer in a better position, he would be happy to do so.

SIR R. E. WEBSTER said, it was because the distinction he alluded to was invidious that he brought it forward.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY said, that as Islington was rich in prisons, he had received a great number of memorials from prison officials urging that they should be treated like the other branches of the

Public Service; and he thought there were many reasons why the matter should be favourably considered by the Home Secretary.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) asked when the Report of the Prisons Committee, appointed last year, would be presented to the House? He understood that in some of the Metropolitan prisons there were instances of the non-enforcement of the rule of compulsory retirement at the age of 65, with the result that many men physically unfit were retained in the service, and promotion was retarded.

*Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON called the attention of the Home Secretary to the complaint of prison clerks, that while, owing to the diminution in the number of prisons and other causes, the highest salary they could reach was something like £150, they had been charged in examinations for appointments the full fee of £3, which was applicable to cases in which the maximum salary was from £400 to £450, and that they had been led to enter the service by expectations which had not been realised.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON asked the Home Secretary whether he would allow local authorities to appeal to the Home Office in cases in which they did not agree with the valuer's assessments on police stations, which were the Government buildings he had previously referred to as being under the control of the Home Office?

Mr. ASQUITH, dealing with the various points that had been raised, said, that the question of there being an appeal in the matter of rating from the valuer to the Head of the Department, he would carefully consider in conjunction with the Secretary to the Treasury. As to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Prisons, he expected it every day, and there should be no delay in laying it before the House. As to the 65th Rule of age retirement, so far as he knew it was inflexibly enforced in the prison service, subject to the exception that where officers were taken over from local prisons prior to 1877 their rights as to age, status, and retirement were preserved by a section of the Prisons Act of that year. As to the position and pay of the staff, that was not one of the matters referred to this Committee, but it was a subject he was always ready to consider. The case of the prisons' clerks had been frequently before him, and although he had not the facts before him to enable him to reply to the hon. Member for Preston on the spur of the moment, he might say that, having carefully investigated the matter, he was satisfied that these officers had no substantial grievance as to the particular point which had to be raised.

## ENGLAND AND FRANCE IN AFRICA.

*Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, on the Vote for the Foreign Office, desired to call attention to the encroachments of a great neighbouring Power. He wished to say nothing that could possibly be offensive in any way to that great Power. He quite recognised that the French Government and people had as much right to seek their colonial expansion and imperial commerce as had Great Britain or any other country. But whilst he wished most carefully to avoid saying anything that could be interpreted as showing a hostile feeling towards the Government or people of France, he felt, at the same time, justified in stating that the policy of Her Majesty's Ministry with regard to these encroachments had been, for the past two and a half years, one of very painful and possibly very injurious surrender. There had been a series of surrenders, beginning with the surrender in Siam, and proceeding almost with the rate of geometrical progression ever since, until we had now reached the position that there was no security felt in this country as to what might happen at any moment with regard to the waterway of the Nile. He did not propose to deal with the question of Siam, though the publication of the Blue Books on that subject revealed a state of things, so grievous and injurious to British prestige and honour, that he thought it was almost impossible to speak in language of too strong condemnation of the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Siam 18 months ago. Then there was the question of Sierra Leone, and he might remind the House that the Speech from the Throne this year announced the completion of an agreement with regard to Sierra Leone, but they had reason to believe that by that agreement their ancient and important colony had been completely cut off from trade with its Hinterland by the French. Although he understood there was some agreement with regard to trade not embodied in the arrangement or protocols as to the boundaries, he believed that agreement was a loose and separate one, and only of a temporary nature. He should like to ask the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the French Government had offered any explanation as to the grievous incident which took place at Waima in December 1893, when a British force was attacked at night at a place within British territory, and three gallant British officers killed? In regard to that matter, so far as he was aware, no reparation or explanation even had yet been offered by the Government of France; and he hoped the hon. Baronet would be able to give them some information on the subject. Then there was the question of the Niger territory. There was serious news from the Niger. They knew that for some time a French force and French leaders in that part of Africa had been doing their best to encroach on the commercial and political rights of Great Britain. He was glad to hear the hon. Baronet say that the Government had addressed a remonstrance to the Government of France with regard to the encroachments at two points in the Niger territory, of which they had just heard. He did not say anything now with regard to Madagascar. He only mentioned these matters at all because there had been such a succession of surrenders in all these different instances that the course pursued by the Government required the close attention of the country. They hoped that the surrender in Siam might have led to some concession, on the part of the French Government, with regard to Madagascar or the Nile waterway; but each fresh surrender was marked by a further advance on the part of the French Government more menacing and serious than the last. With reference to the Nile waterway, he hoped the Government would not say that the reference to, or the introduction of, these questions was unjustifiable or might be injurious—because they had been discussed over and over again in both the French Press and the French Legislative Assembly. For the Government, therefore, to claim the right of secrecy or delay even in discussing these questions in the House or in the country, would be quite unjustifiable. It was absolutely wrong that Parliament—which had such a great interest in the imperial greatness and commerce of the country—and the British people also should be kept in ignorance whilst these constant encroachments upon their territory, political influence, and trade were being made by the French Government in almost every quarter of the world. As to the question of the Nile waterway, of all the questions abroad of political rivalry and power—which were likely to arise in the next few years, with the exception, perhaps, only of the future of Asia Minor and the passage of the Straits—the security of the Upper Nile waterway was undoubtedly the principal. There was a race at present proceeding for Transafrican Dominion between France and Great Britain. The French ambition was to extend their influence from west to east—from Senegal on the Atlantic, right across Central Africa, and through the Soudan to the Red Sea, where they already had a port at Obock. If they once succeeded in establishing that position of Transafrican Dominion, the whole of North Africa was bound to become a French possession, Egypt included; and the Mediterranean was almost bound to become a French lake. Then there was the British race from South Africa to the north, from Cape Town to Alexandria—a great dominion which had been very nearly achieved, which only required the small completions of a chain already stretched the greater part of the way, to render it perfect and permanent, and to give this country such advantages of imperial influence and commerce in Africa as it was almost impossible to over-rate. Anyone who was in any way familiar with the aims and policy of that eminent man who had done so much to extend British dominion in South Africa, and to open up vast regions in that country to British commerce and colonisation, would know that the great ambition of Mr. Rhodes was, to complete this chain of British communication and territory from Alexandria to Cape Town and *vice versa.* He wished to point out the extreme gravity of allowing the French to get possession of any portion of the Upper Nile water. Any great European Power that held almost any portion of the Upper Nile held Egypt practically at its mercy. The Nile was Egypt and Egypt was the Nile. Any Power which controlled the waters of the Nile held Egypt at its mercy, and would be able to impose any terms it pleased upon the Egyptian people or the British Government, which held control over, and was responsible for, the policy of Egypt. Some years ago, that great authority on Egyptian and Soudanese questions, the late Sir Samuel Baker, told him that any European Power holding the Upper Nile would hold Egypt at its mercy. A distinguished military officer had used this remarkable expression last year :—

> "If I were the Mahdi, I would make Egypt pay for every quart of water that runs down the Nile :"

and early in the present year, Sir Colin Scott-Moncreiff, speaking in this country, said :—

> "As to diverting the Nile in the Soudan, and depriving Egypt of its water, though there might be no danger from the Mahdi : what the Mahdi could not do, a civilised people could do. It is very evident that the civilised possessor of the Upper Nile Valley holds Egypt in his grasp. . . . A civilised nation on the Upper Nile would surely build regulating sluices across the outlet of the Victoria Nyanza and control that great sea as Manchester controls Thirlmere. This would be an easy operation. Once done, the Nile supply would be in their hands, and if poor little Egypt had the bad luck to be at war with this people in the upper waters, they might flood Egypt or cut off the water supply at their pleasure. The Nile, from the Victoria Nyanza to the Mediterranean, and should be under our rule."

That was the view of a gentleman whose knowledge and work in Egypt was unrivalled, and whose experience no expert would venture to contradict. This was why he was calling attention to the matter now, in order, if possible, to ensure that the Government would do their duty in respect to it. The great danger lay in the possibility that, if our Government did not bestir itself, we might some day be encountered by a *fait accompli* in the shape of a foreign occupation of the Upper Nile. Finding that some other Power held Egypt at its mercy, we should then be obliged to give up our great work in that country, or to undertake that most difficult of all operations, namely, the dislodging of a great Power from that remote part of Africa. This country now held the mouths of the Nile, and held also the source of the Nile ; we held Egypt up to Wadi Halfa. What was now wanted was prompt action on the part of Her Majesty's Government, in order that this country might effectively occupy also all that part of the Nile waterway, which was not in Egyptian territory, or under Egyptian control. Until this was done, this country had no pledge that the French would not forestall us. It was not as if we had no warnings. We had had warnings enough. Her Majesty's Government, after some considerable delay had occupied Uganda, and for this he wished to give them every credit. They also saw that it was necessary to establish a buffer State. He would remind the Committee of the enormous advances made by the French across Central Africa—he believed, as much as 1,000 miles in five years. This was truly portentous, and was, in fact, greater than the advance of any other people in that part of Africa during the same period. It was also known that large French forces were now established on the upper region of the Congo, and upon a tributary of that river called the Ubanghi. He had put a question to the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) that afternoon on the subject, as to where the French Expedition, which left the Ubanghi some nine months ago, now was. He did not know whether the Under Secretary would not, or whether he could not, give any definite information on the subject, but his answer did not make the matter clear. A statement appeared on the subject some three weeks ago in a leading article which appeared in *The Times* newspaper on March 5th. The statement there made appeared to be put forward with authority, and in a way which that journal rarely made use of without good reason. The article stated that a French expedition had left the upper waters of the Ubanghi some eight months previously. Our Government ought to have gunboats on the upper waters of the Nile, and patrol the river as far as Lado, and even Fashod, and ought to take steps to find out where this French force really was at the present time. It was an extraordinary illustration of the neglect of the present Parliament of these grave questions, that the greatest insults and humiliation to this country during the present century had been passed over with perfect indifference, and even in silence. Her Majesty's Government had, in regard to this part of Africa, adopted a feeble device, and had tried to shove the little Congo Free State up into the the region of the Western Nile basin, and so use that State as a buffer. That was a policy he admitted, though an unworthy one; but it had absolutely failed. By the treaty made last year by Her Majesty's Government, on May 12th, the Congo Free State was put into possession of about 100,000 square miles of territory, more or less, lying between latitude 5° and latitude 11°, between longitude 25° and longitude 30°. What then happened? A week afterwards the French Minister for Foreign Affairs went down to the *Corp Législatif* on June 7, 1894, and solemnly made the following statement. The hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) would not, he presumed, dispute the accuracy of the statement then made by M. de Hanotaux, whose concluding words were:—

> "The Anglo-Congolese Convention being in manifest contradiction to the principles of the Treaty of Berlin, must be considered by us as not legitimate, and, untilfurther information, as null and void."

But not only did the French declare our treaty between two independent Powers —Great Britain and the Congo State— to be null and void, but on August 14th they proceeded to make a treaty of their own with the Congo Free State, and compelled that State to turn out of nearly the whole of the territory in which we had just before placed them. That treatment was accepted by Her Majesty's Government without protest, so far as he was aware. But whether our Government had protested or not, the fact remained that, having tried to use the Congo Free State as a buffer between the French possessions and waterway of the Nile, they allowed that State to be driven out of the territory into which we had put them by treaty. In his opinion there was no parallel for such humiliation of one Great Power by another, except after a great war. Her Majesty's Government might say that they did not regard this as an important matter, but the French regarded it as very important indeed. The highest French officer in the French Congo had said:—

> "Our Treaty assures to France access to the valley of the Nile."

That was the view of M. de Brazza, the French Commissary General of the Congo, who was responsible for carrying out the policy of France in the Western Basin of the Nile. The same authority went on to state:—

> "Access to the valley of the Nile from the South is the only way in which we might be enabled one day to settle the Egyptian question in a way consistent with our interests. It is easy to join the Congo territory to the Soudan by way of Darfur."

That meant that the French authorities looked forward to the time when, by diminishing or, possibly, by diverting the flow of the Nile, they might be able to bring pressure upon us and to turn us out of Egypt. M. de Brazza also referred to the easy way of getting from the Congo territory to the Soudan by way of Darfur and thence to Khartoum. M. Deloncle, the leader of the French advance party, had made statements quite as strong, and similar views expressed by various members of the Corps Legislatif might also be quoted. He only referred to these in order to bring to the attention of the Committee and the country the great menace that confronted us, through the attempt that was being made by France to seize the Upper Nile waterway, and eventually, by that means, to turn us out of Egypt. He was fully persuaded, moreover, that France was prepared to take advantage of their opportunities to the very utmost. He must give the hon. Baronet some credit for having stated the other day, that the spheres—that was to say, the sphere of Egyptian influence and that of British influence—covered the whole Nile water-way. The hon. Baronet made the statement with considerable reluctance, but nevertheless it was a very important statement; and, if fully acted up to, and if effective measures were taken, or real assurances were obtained, it would be an important step. In regard to Siam, he believed if the House had the slightest idea of what was going on as to the encroachments in that country it would not endorse the craven policy which the Government had adopted. He admitted some concessions must be made, and that for the sake of peace, a certain yielding might be necessary in certain regions, but the question of the Nile water-way was of first-class importance to this country. That was a question which they were justified in pressing on the Government, because the Government had not been fully alive to their duty in this matter. It was a significant fact that while the French were threatening the Nile waterway to the west, a very remarkable mission from another Great Power, also our rival, was working on the eastern side of the Upper Nile waters. There was a coincidence about this action which was not accidental. A large and influential and well equipped Russian mission went, about six weeks ago, into Abyssinia, bearing costly presents and large sums of money, for distribution among the chieftains and the people. There was another great Power, our ally, which had of late been moving in the direction of the Upper Nile waterway. It was a fortunate thing for us that the Italians were in the Eastern Soudan. It was clear that the future of this country, the future establishment of British Dominion over the Nile waterway, and the civilisation of all those countries, depended on a cordial co-operation between Italy and Great Britain in those regions. Events were marching rapidly. It was evident that the future of Egypt must rest with the Power that succeeded first in getting control and possession of the Nile waterway. There was little time to be lost. We might be confronted almost at any moment with a *fait accompli*, in the shape of a French occupation of some portion of the Nile, which would render our position in Egypt untenable, or which would oblige us to undertake a tremendous struggle in order to maintain it. This was the most important question in all our foreign policy at the present moment, and if the Government wished to save the cause of British interests they must act vigorously and promptly.

Major DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he had an Amendment on the Paper very similar to that moved by the hon. Member for Sheffield, with the difference that he proposed to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by £100 only. The subject under discussion was the region of the head waters of the Nile. He believed he was right in saying that the doctrine of effective occupation did not apply to the interior of Africa, and the the fact that we had no effective occupation there did not interfere in any way with our rights of trading in that district. Our claim to that district lay in the fact that we had entered into an agreement with Germany and Italy by which those two nations had agreed not to interfere with our sphere of influence. The French, he understood, had not agreed to this bargain in any way, yet the fact that they had not definitely protested against it gave us, he thought, a fair claim to consider this as part of our sphere of protection. He did not think the Government had made any clear statement of the object they had in view in entering into the leasing arrangements between this country and the Congo Free State. The reasons might be awkward to give, but they might perhaps be guessed. In the first place, the Government wished to get ground under British control for the time being over which a road and telegraph line might be constructed connecting Lake Tanganyika and Uganda, in which object they had entirely failed; secondly, they wished to establish the Congo Free State as a buffer against French advance, or it might be that in entering into this lease it was desired to make a fresh declaration before Europe that we looked upon this as territory under our control. If France desired to advance into the British sphere of influence it would not be across the southern portion of the leased territory, but across the northern portion or the sources of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and the fact that the Congo Free State had abandoned this part of the lease showed that there had also been an entire failure to obtain the second object desired. He wished to know where the French were at present; if they were at Bangasso they were in a position to take up a great many of the posts occupied by Belgium in the northern region, and it was important to remember that the French at the present moment were in a position to make a rapid and effective advance on this region. There seemed to be an impression in quarters usually well informed that the French were advancing; it had been so stated in a special article of *The Times* of

March 5, and as the information came from usually well-informed quarters, it was a question worthy of serious consideration. If the French were advancing it was really a very serious matter, because of the value of the region and the fact that France did not acknowledge agreements between third parties as binding upon them. As to the southern part still leased, he would ask, had the lease strengthened our rights over that region? If it had, he thought the fact that the French had forced the Congo Free State to repudiate the contract with regard to the northern part of the sphere must *pro tanto* have weakened our hold over the northern part. If it had not, of what use was the lease, if all it had done was to prevent absolutely any British advance in that sphere and to take no extra precaution against French advance? If we ever had to make an advance towards the navigable sources of the Nile, it would be necessary for us to cross this sphere, inasmuch as the right bank of the Nile was swampy, and below the Albert Nyanza, the river was so full of grass that it was difficult to navigate. His main point was that in this lease we had leased to the Congo Free State the wrong part of the sphere if we wished to check a French advance, and, considering the difficulty that the present portion placed in the way of our advance, he thought the Government would have been well advised if they had cancelled the whole of the lease when the Congo Free State threw over part of it. He thought our policy should be to oppose a French advance in that quarter, for as long as England was the denominating influence in Egypt, she ought to be the denominating influence in the whole of the Nile Valley. The rivers near the sources of the Nile were not great military obstacles, nor were they great highways of communication, and, therefore, did not affect very materially any strategical considerations. He very much doubted if it was possible to divert the Nile, but it was possible to irrigate the Nile valley for some 400 or 500 miles above Khartoum, and to such an extent that the waters of the Lower Nile would be considerably diminished. It might be possible, by means of reservoirs, to irrigate the land beyond Khartoum so as not to interfere with Lower Egypt. Whatever power dominated Egypt, it was of vital importance that it should dominate in the valley above Khartoum. As to the overflow from the big lakes, works there would be of extreme importance to regulate the flow of the Lower Nile. For the same reason we ought to make certain of holding the outlet of the Albert Nyanza, as well as of the lower part of the Nile. He had always felt great doubt as to what should be our policy in Egypt. He would not discuss that now; but as we were the dominating Power we ought to take full responsibility with regard to the advance in the direction of Khartoum in order to prevent any other European Power from getting in such a position that it could inflict serious injury on Egypt. He urged the Government to send a small force to place the British flag on the junction of Bahr-el-Ghazal and Bahr-el-Jebel. If we had those two points under British control we should for a time have secured our advance towards the Nile Valley. A small force would accomplish such a work, and our occupation would be as effectual as any that the French were likely to get. If we did not abandon the whole of our policy we were bound to make a railway across to Uganda. One of the strongest arguments the Govment brought against the railway was with reference to the dual control exercised by the company and the Government over that region. That excuse no longer availed. By an arrangement only made within the last day or two the East Africa Company was going out of that region, and the Government would have sole control. So they had full responsibility, and, as far as he could see, they had no longer any excuse for not pushing forward that railway, which was so necessary. In his opinion, the easiest method of advance would be by the Suakin-Berber route. The Uganda route was not the best by which to attack those regions, but the Suakin-Berber route was. It was most important that we should come to a definite and distinct understanding as to what our policy was in this region. The Government, by making these leases, indicated that they thought it necessary some steps should be taken to prevent France advancing. Their leases had failed to effect that object. They were bound to secure those regions to British influence now that their original proposals had so completely prevailed. Those proposals might have been good, sensible, and right at the time they were made. But they had failed from causes which the Government might or might not have foreseen, and now the Government should see it was necessary to take further action in that direction. He did not wish to press the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs too much. But he hoped the hon. Baronet would give an assurance that the Government was looking into this question, and would advance in the direction he had indicated and secure the Valley of the Nile to British influence.

MR. W. JOHNSTON said, he only intervened in the discussion to ascertain what course the Government intended to adopt with regard to the protection of British interests in Madagascar. Every day brought news of increasing military enthusiasm with which the French expedition to Madagascar was being viewed in France. One of the newspapers asserted that a letter had been written by a French officer in Madagascar calling on the French not only to assert their protectorare over the island, but to drive out the Queen and the Hova Government, and entirely to conquer the island, in the interests of France. For a long series of years Christian missionaries from England had taken an interest in the affairs of Madagascar, and they had endeavoured to Christianise and civilise the people of the island. In this they had obtained remarkable success. He knew there were some hon. Members who——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) rose to Order, and asked whether it would not be convenient to keep the question of Madagascar separate from the question of Egypt and the Upper Nile.

THE CHAIRMAN agreed that it would be more convenient.

MR. JOHNSTON asked why he should be out of Order when the hon. Member for Sheffield, who brought forward a matter relating largely to Madagascar, was not.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not say that the hon. Member is out of Order. But I agree that it would be more convenient to keep the questions of Madagascar and Egypt and the Upper Nile distinct.

MR. JOHNSTON: I at once bow to your ruling, Sir. But I deeply regret that I have not the opportunity to protest against the attempt on the part of France to repress the liberties of a patriotic people.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said, his hon. Friend would have an opportunity later on of raising the question.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) remarked that, while he could not agree with every word that fell from his hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, he thought his hon. Friend was fully justified in bringing forward this question. The Leader of the Opposition stated on the first night of the meeting of Parliament that it was not the intention of the Opposition to attempt to make any Party capital out of questions of foreign policy, and he did not think it could be laid to their charge that they had now, in any sense, departed from what the Leader of the Opposition then said. But the matters to which his hon. Friend had drawn attention were so important and so serious that if the House were to pass them by in absolute silence on such an occasion as this, a very mistaken view might be taken of our policy at home and abroad He supposed that there was a general consensus of opinion, if not entire unanimity, in the House, as to what our policy should be in that particular quarter of Africa. He supposed that the general sense of the House would be found to be in agreement with the hon. and Gallant Member opposite—that so long as we were in Egypt (without discussing the policy of the evacuation or of remaining there) it was necessary for us to have political control of the upper waters of the Nile, and that if we were to retire from the position we now held, or if, to use a phrase of modern political slang, we failed to "implement" the agreements and conventions into which we had entered with regard to that particular quarter, we should find ourselves in considerable difficulty in dealing with any Foreign Power which might choose to establish itself on the banks of the river. That being so, he did not think he was going too far in saying that the general opinion of the House was that we should retain our position there, if we did not extend it. Then the question was, what our rights were in that quarter. If he read correctly the engagement into which this country had entered in recent years, as far as our "paper rights" were concerned, he thought they were well established. In 1890 we entered into an arrangement with Germany to delimit our respective spheres of influence in East Africa. It was admitted and agreed by Germany that our sphere of influence went—to quote the exact words—"as far as the confines of Egypt." Therefore, when his hon. Friend, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, recently stated that it was the view of the Government that the Egyptian and the British spheres of influence were coterminous, that was not a new admission on the part of the Government, but a statement which was made public as long ago as July 1, 1890. So much for the German Government. With regard to the Italian Government, an Agreement was made in 1891 which defined more accurately the special sphere of influence between Italy and Great Britain, and which provided that the sphere of influence of Great Britain should reach as far as a certain point, called, he believed, Ras Kasar, on the Red Sea. Therefore we had at that time, up to 1891, admissions from the German Government and from the Italian Government that our sphere of influence went as far as the confines of Egypt. Then we came to what had been called the lease—the Agreement entered into by Her Majesty's Government in May of last year. His hon. friend who spoke last was rather sceptical as to the value of this lease made to the Congo Free State. He presumed that the object of Her Majesty's Government in entering into this Agreement was to obtain from the Congo Free State a distinct acknowledgment that this territory lying between the Nile and the watershed of the Nile and the Congo was within the British sphere of influence. In entering into the Agreement the Congo Free State made that acknowledgment, and, although it was true that, by a subsequent Agreement, the Congo Free State had agreed with France to renounce any rights she may have in a particular portion of that territory, the acknowledgment of the Congo Free State that we had the right to make that lease and to deal with that territory still stands good. At all events, as to a portion of it, it stands good in the eyes of France itself; as to the remainder, we have the acknowledgment of the Congo Free State that we are entitled to consider the basin of the Nile as being within our sphere of influence. It was suggested that it might be said by France:—

> "Oh, we have never assented to any of these agreements; our consent has never been asked; they have never been submitted to us, and therefore we know nothing whatever about them."

In a sense, of course it was true; but the reason France was never asked to assent to those Agreements surely was because at the time they were made France was nowhere near the locality in question. The last Agreement of France with the Congo Free State was made in April 1887. That Agreement delimitated the frontier between French Congo and the Congo Free State up to a certain point along the river Welle, a very considerable distance from the watershed between the Nile and the Congo. It was totally unnecessary to submit to France Agreements which at that time did not at all concern her. Then came the question whether the Agreements were worth anything at all. In face of them, although they were not submitted to her, yet, as they must have been known to her through the ordinary channels of information, would France be entitled to send an armed expedition into the middle of the territory which she knew to be claimed by Great Britain? As to the alleged expedition, he was not in a position to know more than any other Member, but he was sceptical as to its marching in the direction it was said to be—namely, towards the Nile. It was originally sent up to French Congo at the time when France and the Congo Free State were disputing with regard to the frontier between the two States. Matters had become rather strained and the expedition was probably now some considerable way up the Congo and along the river Welle. Nothing had been heard with regard to it; and the commander who was to have taken charge of it was ordered off upon other duty in West Africa. He could hardly believe that a friendly Power like France would send an armed expedition into a territory which we claimed under such circumstances. The question remained whether we were going to do anything to implement the claims we had upon this particular locality. He was not in a position to suggest what course should be taken; and he must leave the matter to the Government with their fuller knowledge. In conclusion, he wished to ask whether any information could be given with regard to another part of Africa—namely, the Niger. A serious statement was made in regard to certain expeditions which were said to have come down upon the banks of the Niger in territory which had been acquired by the Niger Company, and be believed occupied by them for years. He could hardly credit that any expeditions had been despatched by the Government of France into this locality; but if the statement were confirmed, he should be glad of an assurance that the matter would at once be brought to the attention of the Government of France as to this extraordinary violation of territory which for so many years had been under the British flag.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The hon. Member opposite began his speech by claiming for himself and the leaders of the Opposition that they had not, during the two and a half years that the present Government have been in power, done anything to inconvenience the Government in their foreign policy by making party capital out of any questions or incidents which have arisen. I freely and gladly recognise that that is a perfectly just claim for him to make; and personally I have benefited a great deal by that attitude on the part of the leaders of the Opposition. I freely recognise that the claim which the hon. Member for Penrith has made to-night is one which is justified. I will pass to the particular questions which have been raised in the Debate. There is, first of all, the question of the agreement made last year with the Congo State. The hon. Member for Sheffield said the policy of that agreement had been to try to shove forward the Congo State to occupy British territory. No description of that agreement, of the motives and policy of it, could have been more inaccurate. The Government did not try to shove the Congo State forward at all. When we came into Office we found a large force had already shoved itself forward, and was in part of the territory, at any rate, which was subsequently dealt with by that Agreement. There was no anxiety on our part to shove her forward. What I am asked is: "How is British territory affected by that Agreement, and the position in which it now stands?" Under that Agreement the Congo State have recognised the British sphere. I do not say that recognition is necessary to our claim; but, at any rate, it is right and it is useful that we should have it, and that, undoubtedly, has been one outcome of the Agreement with the Congo State. I pass from that to the position which this country occupies, and is to occupy in the future, with regard to the Valley of the Nile and that part of the British sphere of influence touched upon by the hon. Member for Penrith. The greater number of the speeches that have been made have been devoted to explaining the importance of this question. I have no wish to dispute its importance. On the contrary, I am sensible that it is most important. I am asked, How do we stand with regard to this matter at the present time? As the hon. Member for Penrith has already shown, there was an agreement made in 1890 with Germany and another with Italy defining the British sphere of influence, and obtaining from those two great countries a recognition of the British sphere of influence. The hon. and gallant Member for Lichfield asked whether any effective occupation is necessary to establish the validity of our claims in Africa. A great deal of re-arrangement would have to take place, not in the British sphere only, but in the spheres of other Powers also, if the question of effective occupation is gone into, and its effect on the validity of claims. I am not at all sure that the Power most intimately concerned in that matter is Great Britain. I should say, at all events, that the proportion of our effective occupation to our claims is at least as large as that of other Powers. These Agreements have now been before the world for five years, and though they have not been formally recognised by more than the two Powers concerned, except by the Congo State, they are, at the same time, well known to all the other Powers, and have not been disputed during five years. Besides this, there is the question of the claims of Egypt. Towards Egypt this country stands in a special position of trust, as regards the maintenance of the interests of Egypt, and the claims of Egypt have not only been admitted by us, but they have been admitted and emphasized lately by the Government of France. I stated the other day that, in consequence of these claims of ours, and in consequence of the claims of Egypt in the Nile Valley, the British and Egyptian spheres of influence covered the whole of the Nile waterway. That is a statement following logically upon what has happened in past years, and of what has been in the knowledge of the world for the last two years. I am asked whether or not it is the case that a French expedition is coming from the West of Africa with the intention of entering the Nile Valley and occupying up to the Nile. I will ask the Committee to be careful in giving credence to the rumours of the movement of expeditions in Africa. Even places in Africa are apt to shift about, and it is sometimes found that some place supposed to occupy a particular position does not, in fact, occupy that position. Rumours have come with greater or less freedom with regard to the movements of expeditions in various parts of Africa, but at the Foreign Office we have no reason to suppose that any French Expedition has instructions to enter, or the intention of entering, the Nile Valley; and I will go further and say that, after all I have explained about the claims we consider we have under past Agreements, and the claims which we consider Egypt may have in the Nile Valley, and adding to that the fact that our claims and the view of the Government with regard to them are fully and clearly known to the French Government—I cannot think it is possible that these rumours deserve credence, because the advance of a French Expedition under secret instructions right from the other side of Africa, into a territory over which our claims have been known for so long, would be not merely an inconsistent and unexpected act, but it must be perfectly well known to the French Government that it would be an unfriendly act, and would be so viewed by England. I pass on to deal with the two French Expeditions which are reported to have entered a British Protectorate on the Niger. I have not much to say on that. The Niger Company is informed that two French Expeditions have entered territory which for some years has been known as a British Protectorate. The statement that two French Expeditions have entered such territory standing by itself, uncontradicted and unexplained, is undoubtedly most serious. But the more serious it is, standing unexplained, the more important it is not to make any comment upon it before the reply of the French Government to the communications addressed to it is known. But I have to say this, that undoubtedly the Committee will be right to bear in mind that there are two points of view in regard to those questions—the point of view of their local importance, and the much more serious point of view of their effect on the relations of two great European Powers. It would be idle to deny that there is some importance to be attached to the fact that, during the whole of the Debate no foreign Power has been alluded to except the French Government. Why has that been so? I think it has been so because events in Siam and in Africa have created an unfavourable effect on public opinion in this country, not an anxiety about what has happened—at the proper time I shall be able to defend Her Majesty's Government and to maintain that British interests have not been sacrificed—I say I do not think the anxiety is as to what has happened, but as to what may happen, in the future. During the last two years no provocation whatever as regards the French has come from our side. We have striven to our utmost to reconcile the conflicting interests of the two countries and to promote the maintenance of good relations between the two countries, and we shall omit nothing consistently with the preservation of important and undoubted British claims still to maintain those good relations. But something else besides our own effort is necessary, and that is the cooperation of the French Government and the French public. With that co-operation the task we have fulfilled with success hitherto, of preventing these local differences in different parts of the world from causing any serious disturbance of the relations of two great Powers, ought to be an easy one. We rely now, as we have relied not unsuccessfully hitherto, on the sense of justice and fairness of the French Government and the French people, to reconcile what conflicting interests there may be in different parts of the world, with the maintenance of close and good relations between the two countries.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have listened with the deepest interest to what has fallen from the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. I recognise his responsible position, and I feel that the statement he has now made will give greatest satisfaction to the country, and no doubt to this Committee. It is probably the fullest and clearest statement of the policy of the Government, with regard to the subject which has been under discussion, which we have yet had from a responsible Minister. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs recognises the full importance of the subject we have discussed. He sees that, unless there be a clear understanding between the two great Powers which are coming into contact in Africa, the most serious consequences might easily ensue, and he has undoubtedly made to-day a statement which cannot be misunderstood as to the claims of this country in regard to these regions. He has repeated and enlarged upon his statement of the other day, which was to the effect that the whole of the basin of the Nile, the whole of the Nile waterway from the lake, was either in the sphere of Egyptian or British influence. He has told us to-night that the claim on the part of the British Government has been before the world, and therefore has been in the full knowledge of the French Government for the last five years: I assume, therefore, that, in his opinion, it has never been disputed by the French Government. And he went on to say that if, in these circumstances, the French Government were to push forward any armed expedition into the country, which we have for five years past claimed as being within our sphere of influence, that that would be an unfriendly act on the part of the French Government, and would be so regarded by this country. As I have said, that is perfectly satisfactory if, as we most earnestly hope, the position is understood and accepted with equal clearness by the Representatives of the French Government. If we have ever entertained any doubt on that point I must say it is due to those Debates in the French Assembly which are not always characterised by the reserve which we endeavour to maintain here. As recently as the beginning of the present month the following statement was made by a member of the French Legislative Body who has interested himself greatly in those colonial questions:—

> "Our sole aim has been to make England feel the harm she is doing us in not keeping her engagements in Egypt, and to show her that we can come up to her elsewhere than in the Mediterranean."

That statement was made in the presence of the Ministry, after a previous statement to the effect that they had no desire to colonise the Upper Nile or the Congo or the Ubangi. It would appear, therefore, from these statements, that they were entering upon this enterprise with the object of showing England that they could come up to her elsewhere than in the Mediterranean. Statements like these have been made more than once by French Representatives in the Assembly. We expect from the French Government, if they do not accept these statements—and we do not believe for a moment that they do accept them—that they should repudiate them. That is what would be done here in parallel circumstances; but I am unable to find that there was any repudiation in the French Chamber of the statement which I have read. That justifies such a discussion as this. It makes it necessary for us, at any rate, to have a clear statement as to our position from the Government of our country, and a tremendous responsibility would rest upon them if they did not make the position which we occupy equally clear to a Foreign Government. I hope we may agree with the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs that these rumours very often go far beyond the truth. We are dealing with very distant countries where we have no solid footing, and it may well be that reports that come to us are very far from the truth, and it would be unwise and unpatriotic if we were to act upon these reports without confirmation. I should think, however, that possibly in a matter so important as this, in which the good feeling between two countries is largely involved, some perfectly friendly and reasonable inquiry might be made, with a view to ascertaining what truth there was even in a report of this kind. An assurance from the Government of France, that no such expedition was intended or authorised, or had started, would be in fact even more satisfactory than the statement of my hon. friend the Under Secretary that, if it were to start, it would be considered as an unfriendly act. We do not want to be placed in a position in which we may have to say to the Government of any other civilised country that they have been guilty of an unfriendly act. When it comes to that, things are becoming serious. We do not want to be placed in the position of even suggesting that a foreign Power could be guilty of an unfriendly act, and I confess it would be very satisfactory to some of us if, of their own accord, the Government of France could give us some assurance as to their intentions, and as to the instructions which they may have given to these expeditions in distant countries—which would relieve our minds, which we should accept as given in perfect good faith, and which would render perfectly unnecessary any further public discussion of the matter. I rose, however, to say that, in my opinion, the declaration of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs is perfectly satisfactory. It shows that the Government are fully aware of the importance of the question, and I should not dare to interfere even for a moment with their responsibility.

*MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said that he did not desire to pursue the subject of the Nile Valley. He thought, however, the House must have been impressed by the rather alarming language of the Under Secretary. He had no doubt that that language was duly weighed and considered before it was uttered in that House. He proposed to call attention to the conduct of the Government in connection with Siam. The essentially important negotiations with reference to Siam took place between October 1892, and April 1893, and all that time they were asking for information and being told that it was contrary to the public interest that information should be given whilst the negotiations were proceeding. It was not until the 18th of last August that the Blue-book was published. That was the Saturday before the House rose, and so there was no time for a discussion of the subject. He had read the Blue-book from beginning to end, and, in his opinion, a more painful exhibition of violent language and weak action, of high pretension and absolute failure had never been seen. Lord Rosebery had all the cards in his hands. He had right; he had force, for the force of France in those territories was in no way equal to ours, and he ought to have had the instincts that would move a generously-minded man to stand by a good ally and customer of England. But though Lord Rosebery held the cards he did not succeed in winning a single trick in the game. At every point he used the strongest language; at every point he was driven off, defeated, discredited, almost disgraced. What was the excuse that he gave for his repeated failures? On July 25 he said—

> "Our policy has all along been to rely on French promises, and I regret to say that, no doubt under the force of circumstances, these have not been fulfilled."

Ought a Minister for Foreign Affairs to rely upon promises and then to whimper because, forsooth, those promises were not fulfilled? It showed a simplicity which he trusted would be rare in British Foreign Ministers. He admitted that it might be extremely difficult to carry out the most sacred engagements, that there might be considerable reasons to prevent a Foreign Minister from confronting the responsibility of pushing matters to the verge of war. He admitted all that, but when a Foreign Minister was conscious of that feeling he ought to measure most carefully the language that he used. This was what Lord Rosebery had not done, but the contrary. On April 12, 1893, Lord Rosebery certainly became aware of the serious nature of the problem before him. On that date he wrote to our Resident in Siam—

> "Although friendly intentions towards Siam are professed (by France) there is every appearance of forcing unreasonable terms upon the Siamese Government by menaces."

From that date, therefore, no action by France, however extraordinary, no application of force, however great, could have surprised Lord Rosebery, for he was prepared for it. The duty of the Foreign Minister in these circumstances was clear and plain. It was his duty to make up his mind how far he would go in resisting this intention of forcing unacceptable terms upon Siam. But the first thing he did was to tell the Siamese Minister that he could not receive him.

"I think, therefore [he wrote], that it would be more prudent if the Siamese Minister refrained from asking for an official interview which is sure to be noticed by the Press."

A few days later the Siamese were advised to "make the best terms they could with France," and then Sir Philip Currie was authorised by Lord Rosebery to tell the French Ambassador that he had given this advice to the Siamese Minister. There could not possibly be a more patent and open avowal that Lord Rosebery had absolutely abandoned the Siamese to the tender mercy of the French. And it was regarded by France as a direct invitation for her to proceed in her purpose. Menaces soon degenerated into force; and in April and May there was fighting. On June 30, a Declaration was made by the French Government that they had no intention of interfering with the integrity of Siam. But still the gunboats continued to go to the Siamese coast. We were told that any further movements of the French Fleet would be communicated to England. These movements were not communicated. On July 13, the French Government gave us a distinct undertaking that their gunboats would remain outside the Menam river. On that very day, however, these gunboats forced the passage of the Menam and went on to Bangkok. Then followed the blockade and the painful story of the affront of the British flag when the British war vessels were ordered to leave the river and remain outside. The *Pallas* was actually interfered with when she was outside the limits of the blockade. Her commander very properly resisted and resented this interference, and an explanation was given by the French Commander. This pretended blockade—for it never was a blockade—would not have been effected if permission had not been given to the French to coal at Singapore. That was one of the reasons why he asserted that all the cards were in the hands of our Foreign Minister. The French demands continued until ended by the Treaty of October 3, and the dismemberment of Siam. The French claimed the whole of the left or eastern bank of the Mekong, and on July 20, Lord Rosebery wrote—

"Firstly, we cannot doubt that the term 'left bank' is far too comprehensive in its scope. It cannot, of course, apply to any district east of the Mekong River, which the Siamese Government have no power to cede, whether from rights of sovereignty, suzerainty, or reversion possessed by other powers."

But the left bank was ceded, and consequently Lord Rosebery was driven from his first position with defeat and discredit. His second position was that the integrity of Siam must not be interfered with. On July 20, 1893, he wrote—

"We are confident that the expression 'left bank of the Mekong' is used subject to the assurances repeatedly given by the French Government that they would respect the independence and integrity of the kingdom of Siam. It is clear that any provinces which indisputably form part of that Monarchy could not properly be made the subject of any such demands by the French Government."

Nevertheless, precisely such demands were made and enforced, and finally had to be conceded. So, as to the second requirement, Lord Rosebery was driven with discredit, if not with disgrace, from his position. As to Luang Probang, Lord Rosebery wrote, on 26th July 1893

"As an honest man, he [M. Develle] must be as convinced as I was that the district in question was, and had been for nearly a century, *boná fide* Siamese territory, and that it could not be confiscated by France without a flagrant infringement of the formal assurances he had given us not to impair the integrity of Siam."

But M. Develle, in reply, peremptorily refused to "withdraw or modify" his demands, and Luang Probang was confiscated, and it was in French possession at present. So that Lord Rosebery was driven from his third position with discredit, if not disgrace. His fourth position was, that the French officers were primarily responsible for what took place

*Mr. T. Gibson Bowles.*

at the forcing of the Menam, and that they acted "in flagrant opposition to the engagements" of the French Government. What was the answer? Lord Rosebery gave the answer himself—

> "I observe these officers have been publicly noted for promotion in recognition of their conduct."

This was the fourth point from which Lord Rosebery was driven with discredit, if not disgrace. The fifth point was with regard to foreign trade. On September 7, 1893, Lord Rosebery wrote that Her Majesty's Government had publicly announced in Parliament that they

> "regarded the independence and integrity of Siam as a British interest of high importance,"

and that they had repeated assurances from the French Government that this was an object in which they were equally interested. Lord Rosebery went on to say that the foreign trade was almost entirely in British hands,

> "and we could not preserve an attitude of benevolence or neutrality towards any attempt to impose restrictions upon it with a view to divert it into other channels."

What was the action taken in support of these very serious, nay, menacing words? The blockade, as Lord Rosebery himself said, was directed against British commerce alone, and the whole action of the French was directed to the encouragement of French trade at the expense of British trade, so that from the fifth position Lord Rosebery was driven with discredit, if not disgrace. What did he say with regard to the French demand as to Battambang and Ankor? He wrote on 9 September 1893—

> "The treatment of the two provinces of Battambang and Ankor as separate and distinct from the other portions of the Siamese kingdom seems to us inadmissible."

Yet France at once proceeded so to treat them, and she even prohibited Siam from having any armed force in Battambang and Ankor. France claimed with regard to the right bank to the extent of 25 kilometres, that it should be entirely free from Siamese influence. What did Lord Rosebery say about that? That

> "as far as he was able to judge, there was no justification for the attempt to constitute a new boundary."

Nevertheless, it was enforced, finally brought to an end, and included in the Treaty with Siam of October 3. Consequently from his seventh position the Foreign Minister was thus driven. Finally, he came to Chantabun. France had told Lord Rosebery again and again that she had no intention whatever of retaining it. But she had retained the place to this day, and it would be retained until certain things had occurred, which, whether they occurred or not, were to be measured by the opinion of the French Government, and that alone. From eight different positions, therefore, taken up in language almost verging on a declaration of war, certainly of unheard-of strength, quite unusual in the mouth of an English Foreign Minister, Lord Rosebery was successively driven, sometimes with contumely, sometimes with contempt, always with defeat. He came now to the last phase of this matter. It was alleged that an infraction of the Treaty had been made by France through the occupation by her of a village called Keng Kong, and also through her sending six French Residents into the neutral zone of 25 kilomètres on the right bank of the Mekong. He thought that there was no infraction of the treaty at all in these respects. The Treaty with Siam gave France the right to establish posts on the right bank of the Mekong for certain purposes—stations for boats, stores of wood, coal, and so forth. Furthermore, while it drove Siam out of the 25 kilometres zone, it forbade her to maintain any posts, or troops, or authorities there. It gave the French especial authority, and it gave France power to issue passes and placed her in a position of quasi-authority, in this zone from which the Siamese themselves had been entirely driven. If it was the case that the French had occupied Keng Kong for one of the purposes provided for by the Treaty, he saw no infraction of it. If, on the other hand, there were six residents in the zone of 25 kilomètres with the permission or even with the allowance of Siam, there also he saw no infraction of the Treaty on the part of Siam. He saw serious, even grave, objection to the Treaty itself. But the fault did not lie with the Siamese; it lay, in his opinion, with the weak course of action followed by the English

Foreign Minister—a course of action which involved the shabby desertion of our friends the Siamese. One word in conclusion as to the buffer State or neutral zone. He observed that the French newspapers and the members of the French Chamber were quarrelling over the term "buffer State." They said that there was no buffer State; it was nothing but a neutral zone. The two terms were interchangeable. M. Casimir-Perier so used the two terms in the Chamber; he described it as "buffer State, or neutral zone." If a choice had to be made between the two terms, he should say that buffer State, and not neutral zone, was the right term. What was done about this State? There were long paragraphs as to the character of this buffer State in the Despatches sent from the Foreign Office; and one fact which proved to his mind that it was meant to be a buffer State and not a mere neutral zone was this, that the Chinese Government was asked to undertake, and did agree to undertake, the Gevernment of the State when it should be formed. The Dispatch containing the consent of the Chinese Government to accept the government of the buffer State was sent to the French Government in December, 1893. An answer was requested from the French Government as to the view it would take of this arrangement in connection with the State; but whether any answer had been forthcoming he did not know. There was, at any rate, no answer in the Blue Book. The last and most important declaration of Lord Rosebery was made as to this buffer State or neutral zone; and it was a very serious declaration indeed, considering the present aspect of affairs. It would be found on page 188. After referring to the negotiations which had taken place between England and France with regard to the form of this State, the intention of which was to introduce between the English Indian frontier and the French frontier, something like a buffer, so as to prevent the two from meeting, Lord Rosebery wrote, on 27th October 1893:—

> "Should these negotiations, however, unfortunately fail, and should the French Government be unable to accept the above proposal (which is offered in a most conciliatory spirit), the British Government would have to take such measures as they might consider necessary for their own protection. These it is not necessary more particularly to define. But they would, at any rate, be compelled to maintain and strengthen their hold over the State of Kyaing Chaing on both sides of the Mekong and over Kyaing Ton, which also extends for a certain distance along the left side of that river in such manner as they might deem fitting, and indeed to assume a proper control of the river itself, where it passes through their territories. They would also take into immediate consideration the measures necessary to preserve an independent State between the main body of the British dominions and those of France."

That language also, it would be seen, was of a somewhat alarming, if not indeed of a threatening character. The situation was this; above Luang Probang, for 200 miles the Mekong ran through the Shan States as far as the Chinese frontier. Lord Rosebery said:—"You may also take half of the Mekong if you like, and agree with us as to the upper part with regard to the formation of a buffer State or neutral zone; if you can do so, well and good; but if not we shall take such measures as are necessary for our own protection, and to assert our claims on both sides of the Mekong; we shall quicken and tighten our grasp on the Shan States under our suzerainty." Would Lord Rosebery maintain that position? They could have little hope that he would stand to his position in the ninth case more than in the previous eight cases. He had felt it necessary upon this, the first available occasion, to bring these matters before the Committee, because it was not merely the reputation of a Foreign Minister or of Her Majesty's present Government but the reputation of England that was at stake. It had not been the custom of English Ministers to let their act fall behind their word; their custom had been rather the reverse. Lord Rosebery, however, had run away from his word. ["Oh!"] Yes, he submitted that he had proved up to the hilt that this had been the conduct of the English Foreign Minister at this moment. It was because it was not the reputation of the Foreign Minister nor that of the Government, but the reputation of England, that was at stake at this moment that he had ventured to bring the matter before the Committee.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, the interesting historical *résumé* of the hon. Gentleman with regard to the transactions on the banks of the Mekong was unimportant in comparison with the speech of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with regard to what it was contemplated to do on the banks of the Nile. The speech of his hon. Friend was a speech of menace addressed to France. ["Oh, oh!"] He thoroughly understood why hon. Gentlemen opposite said "Oh, oh!" They were delighted when they got a Liberal Minister to act on their principles. He repeated that the speech of his hon. Friend was a speech of menace to France. It was addressed to France in a tone of "Hands off!" Why did hon. Gentlemen opposite quarrel with him when he said the Under Secretary's speech was one of menace addressed to France, and cheer when he said it was a speech of the tone of "Hands off"? Why must France be ordered to keep her hands off a territory extending some thousand miles along the banks of the Nile between the lakes and the southern frontier of Egypt? The hon. Gentleman told the Committee that this territory belonged to this country; he seemed to consider that the Nile was as much our property as the Thames. The hon. Gentleman told them it was well known to the world that the territory belonged to us. He would like the hon. Gentleman to tell the Committee whether in any diplomatic document it had ever been stated to France that we had any more right to this long stretch of the Valley of the Nile than France herself. The Under Secretary seemed to think we were bound to go there, not only because the territory belonged to us, but because we were the representatives of the Egyptian Government. He would like to have it clear from his hon. Friend whether we claimed that this territory belonged to us or whether we merely claimed that as the Representatives of the Egyptian Government we had a right to go there and defend it against all comers. We recently annexed Uganda. At the time he asked again and again—what was the northern frontier of our sphere of influence? So far as he could understand, the northern frontier was very little beyond the northern portion of Uganda. In regard to Egypt, it must surely be in the recollection of hon. Members that after the Egyptian campaign Egypt wished to retain the Soudan, but the English Government of that day would not recognise any sort of claim on her part to the Soudan except such portions as Suakin and one or two little ports on the Red Sea. His hon. Friend said France must understand that if she wished to maintain friendly relations with us she must not come anywhere near the Valley of the Nile. ["Hear, hear!"] He did not know what his hon. Friend meant by maintaining friendly relations. Really the language of his Friend amounted to a *quasi*-declaration of war against France. We went to Egypt under a solemn pledge that our occupation would be a mere temporary one, but we had done our best to convert it into a permanent one. It was nonsense to say we were in Egypt for the benefit of Egypt—merely there in order to establish a firm government in Egypt. People did not remain 14 or 15 years in a country like Egypt for any such purpose. The veil was almost torn aside. They saw what appeared in the newspapers, and they heard what was uttered by hon. Gentlemen in the House of Commons. Practically hon. Gentlemen did not intend under any circumstances to evacuate Egypt. Hon. Gentlemen agreed, notwithstanding our plighted word, we were not to evacuate Egypt. He had no doubt the Government would say they were most anxious our occupation of Egypt should terminate as soon as possible. If we evacuated Egypt, what earthly benefit would this territory be to us? No sort of benefit at all. And yet we were to warn off every other Power and particularly France. He protested against Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench suddenly starting such an extraordinary doctrine. We had no more right to this territory than France or any other Power. We had no more right to it than Italy—than Germany. It was perfectly true—that we made some arrangement between Germany and Italy, telling Germany they might go to one part and telling Italy they might go to another part; but towards third Powers—France or Russia, for instance—that did not give us any right. He, therefore, wanted the Under Secretary to tell the Committee specifically by what right we claimed that this territory belonged to us.

Sir R. TEMPLE said the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton made it necessary that some one who sat on the Opposition side should offer a brief reply. He desired to speak with respect of the hon. Member, but really he was acting as the advocate of France in this matter. Everything was construed against England and in favour of France by the hon. gentleman. Indeed, his speech was one that might be delivered in the French Parliament by an opponent of this country. The hon. Member challenged the Government on what grounds they made that claim to the whole valley of the Nile, from the source to the mouth. That claim was made on two grounds. The first was that we were and had been for some time in possession of the source of the Nile; and the second was that we were in occupation of the mouth of the Nile. That occupation might not end in annexation, but it was not a temporary occupation. It was an occupation until Egypt was able to govern herself. That obviously meant an occupation for a very long time. (Ministerial laughter.) Hon. Members opposite laughed, but when did they expect that Egypt would be able to govern herself? He was afraid this generation might hardly see that day. In any case we were in possession of the territory under those conditions, and we were bound to see that our occupation was secure––and it could not be secure if a Foreign Power, and possibly a hostile power, was to have occupation of the mid valley of the Nile. That was well-known to every hydraulic engineer. He meant to say that the Power which controlled the mid valley of the Nile could cut off the water running into it. While Egypt was under our protection we were bound to see that its territorial claims were respected, and the claims of Egypt to the whole valley of the Nile had never been abandoned. Under those circumstances our claim to a British sphere of influence from end to end of the Nile was unanswerable. He hoped the Government would not be influenced by their followers to abate one jot or tittle of that claim, in the assertion of which they might rely on the loyal and patriotic assistance of the Members of the Opposition. He was glad to hear that the Government had distinctly told France that such was our claim; and France would know that when we had made a declaration we would stand by it. The hon. Member for Sheffield had done great service to his country by raising the Debate. If those things were debated with the utmost frankness in the French Parliament, why should we not do the same? The Under Secretary of State had said that if friendly relations were to be maintained between England and France, that could only be done by co-operation between the two countries. But co-operation meant some friendly action on both sides on behalf of both nations. Co-operation did notmean that we were to do everything for France and France to do nothing for us. With regard to Siam he should like to know if it was true that French residences had been set up on the right bank of the Mekong. Did the right to establish a Residency imply the right also to have a military outpost or armed station? He should also like to know if the Government had heard anything further of the evacuation of Chantaboon by the French. Last year the hon. Baronet told them that France had given the most positive assurances that Chantaboon would be evacuated in good time, but still France was in occupation. If the Government could give them no futher information, would they give the Committee an assurance that they would make renewed representations to France? Lastly, he urged the importance of coming to some understanding with France regarding the independence and joint guarantee of what remained of the kingdom of Siam.

*Mr. GEORGE CURZON (Lancashire, Southport) did not propose to add anything to the discussion which had taken place on Egypt and the waters of the Nile. He was quite content to leave the matter where it had been left by the excellent speech of the Under-Secretary. For his part he did not detect in that speech any note whatever of menace as interpreted by the hon. Member for Northampton. On the contrary, it seemed to be a speech of admirable dignity and of self-restraint, to which there would be no advantage in adding anything from that side of the House. He desired to make a few observations upon the question of Siam, in which, as the House knew, he took a great interest.

He should like, before the Under-Secretary replied, to ask him some questions about matters which still remained unsettled. He thought the hon. Baronet would admit that throughout the discussions on Siamese affairs very great reticence, reserve, and consideration towards the Government had been shown by the Members of the Opposition. They had studiously refrained from saying anything that could possibly irritate public opinion in a country with which they desired to remain friends, or anything which could at any stage embarrass the conduct of the Government. But, looking back to the history of this affair, he confessed he was becoming a little tired of the replies given by the hon. Baronet, which, while courteous in manner and admirable in tone, gave them no information, and it was with the view of extracting something a little more definite that he ventured to press the hon. Gentleman on the present occasion. The first of the matters remaining unsettled was the question of the French posts on the right bank of the Mekong. The other day there appeared in the newspapers a statement that a French post had been established at Keng-Kong, on the right bank of the river, and naturally their suspicions were aroused at this announcement. The hon. Baronet was asked a question, and he replied that the Government had not heard of any French post on the right bank. It was a significant thing that on the day upon which that answer appeared there was also published the translation of an extract from *Le Temps*, to which reference had already been made. That extract was as follows:—

> "The Siamese Government, in fact, with a view to facilitating French control in the neutral zone of 25 kilometres situated on the Siamese bank of the Mekong, has authorised the French Government to instal French residents permanently in that zone. Thus, for instance, there are at present French residencies at Pnom, Banmuk, Lakhone, Outhene, and Nong Kai. . . These residencies were indispensable, for they were placed in towns, situate on the right bank of the river, which are the centre of all the political and economic life of the region, whereas on the left bank (the French side) the centres of population are sparse."

He should like to ask the hon. Baronet this question:—According to the information the Government possessed, were these French Residencies there or not? If they were, under what clause, or under what terms of the treaty or convention had they been so established? In Article 6 of the treaty, it was stated that the French Government were at liberty to establish on either bank institutions for the relays of boats, stores, wood, and coal. Were these French residents managers of wood and coal depôts? He observed from the Blue Book that the French Government were entitled to establish Consulates, and it might be contended that these French residents were Consuls. But, if so, the Committee were entitled to information from the Government on the subject. The terms of the treaty, as he read them, seemed to himself hardly compatible with such an interpretation. That the French were endeavouring to establish their influence in the 25-kilometre strip was an undoubted fact, whether it was known to Her Majesty's Government or not. They had already established a Custom House at Paklai. They had done their best to induce a Siamese subject living on the right bank of the Mekong to become a French subject, and to exercise jurisdiction on their behalf. They had also endeavoured to get a Chief to go from one bank to the other and exercise jurisdiction on their behalf. These were all matters which did not, apparently, come within any possible interpretation of the Treaty, and which, therefore, called for information and for explanation by Her Majesty's Government. That the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir E. Grey) would be of that opinion was evident from a speech which he made at the close of last Session, when, replying to the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), he said that the difficulties which had arisen between the French and Siamese Governments were confined to the one bank of the Mekong, and that so long as they were so confined the British Government would not interfere. The Committee might rightly infer that it was the view of the hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) that if French claims were transferred to the other bank of the Mekong our interests would be threatened, and Her Majesty's Government ought to interfere. In regard to Chantaboon, in view of the repeated assurances that the French had given as to evacuating that place, and the strongest possible asseverations on the part of Her Majesty's Government that the French would do so, it seemed impossible that either Government could recede from the pledges given on this point. It might be that the French Government were now proposing to carry out their stipulations, and he would simply ask the Under Secretary, if that were so, to give to the Committee the information for which they had patiently waited for two years, and in regard to which their patience was nearly exhausted. He would next point out that French Consuls had been appointed at two towns in the heart of Cis-Mekong, where French trade was *nil* and English trade considerable. When he had asked a question on this subject he had been put off by the Under Secretary with the reply that the French Consuls had not then started. Now, they were already there, and he urged upon the Government that British interests ought to be similarly safeguarded, by the appointment of British Consuls at the same places. The French Consuls were rapidly registering natives as French subjects, with a view, no doubt, to claiming extra territorial jurisdiction. He desired to ask whether Her Majesty's Government had taken the necessary and elementary step of appointing British Consuls to the same posts. As to the neutral zone, or buffer State, he had no doubt that it was originally intended that it should be a buffer State and not a neutral zone, which was simply an Alsatia for bad characters. If, however, the protocol constituting a neutral zone were torn up to-morrow it would be immeasurably gratifying to France, and would disappoint nobody here. They had in the despatch read to-night an assurance from Lord Rosebery of which he absolutely approved, that in the event of the negotiations for a neutral zone coming to nothing he was prepared to sustain the position which Great Britain at present enjoyed on both banks of the Mekong River. That position was a much better one both for British commercial and political interests than any neutral zone or buffer State could possibly give us. The only concluding point was with regard to the mutual guarantee. It must be obvious to everyone who had studied this question from the beginning that what was wanted in order to re-establish an equilibrium in that part of the Far East was to insure that no Government and no country, either England or France, should pursue, or, if she had already commenced, should continue a policy of aggression upon Siam. That was to the interest of both parties. It would be undesirable for English interests that France should acquire any further dominion over Siam; it would be unacceptable to France that we should extend our control. At an earlier stage they heard much about this mutual guarantee, and there was a moment, in November, 1893, when the idea was favourably received by M. Develle, the then French Minister for Foreign Affairs. He expressed himself to the Marquis of Dufferin to the effect that such an agreement would be most advantageous, and it would be the surest way of avoiding in the future all chances of friction or misunderstanding. He should be much disappointed if the Committee did not learn that we might shortly expect that some such guarantee on the part of both Governments had been arrived at.

*SIR EDWARD GREY was afraid that he should be obliged, to a great extent, to disappoint the hon. Member, for he had very little fresh information to give. First of all, with regard to the question of the buffer State, he had nothing further to state than that the Commissioners sent by the French and British Governments were engaged in discussing the geographical conditions of the country and investigating them on the spot, and until their recommendations were received it was not probable he should have any further statement to make on the subject. With regard to the question of the 25 kilometre zone, it was quite true there had been a certain amount of friction in that zone, but it was impossible for him to make a statement as to the merits of what had occurred inside that zone. The matters referred to were forming the subject of discussion between the French and Siamese Governments, and so far as his information went, he could not assert that anything was taking place in the 25 kilometre zone which would result in changing the position from that in which it had been left by the papers before the House.

With regard to French Residents geneally, as far as his information went, any Residents who might have been appointed on the right bank of the Mekong were appointed as commercial agents, and they would come within the terms of Articles 6 and 8 of the treaty which the hon. Member for Southport had read to the House. They had not been elevated to the rank of Consuls, but, as he understood, were appointed simply for commercial purposes. He was asked the other day about fortified French posts at Ching Khong, on the right bank of the Mekong, and he stated that they were not on the right, but on the left bank of the river. The authority which he had for making that statement was a telegram received by the Government from official sources about ten days ago, which stated that the French had built one fortified post at Ching Khong garrisoned by militia on the left bank of the Mekong. If he had not much news to say on those questions, it was because matters were in pretty much the same state as they were when the papers referred to were placed before Parliament. The position of affairs had passed into no new phase; but, should it do so, or should there be any further development, then undoubtedly it was to be hoped it would be in the line that was sketched out by the hon. Member for Southport at the end of his speech, a line which would be favourable to the permanent maintenance and integrity of Siam. He would only further say that if the question should enter on any new phrase, whatever it may be, then the words which he used last year, and which had been quoted by the hon. Member for Southport, with regard to the intention and policy of the British Government would hold good.

Sir R. TEMPLE asked the Under-Secretary whether he could give any further information with regard to Chantaboon?

Sir E. GREY said there was no fresh information to give. Discussion was still proceeding as to certain matters within the 25-kilometre zone.

Mr. H. LABOUCHERE asked, whether the hon. Gentleman would say whether the Government had in any sort of way or in any diplomatic document conveyed to the French Government any intimation that claimed paramount influence over the Valley of the Nile.

Sir E. GREY said, he stated very fully in his first speech what the nature and the extent of the British claims and interests were in that part of Africa, and he also stated that those claims, and the views of the British Government with regard to them, were well known to the French Government. The hon. Member for Northampton had characterised his language as the language of menace. He did not think, however, that such a construction could be put upon the language he had used. The intention of that language was to express a desire for a friendly understanding and a friendly arrangement of the many pending questions, but as regarded British trade and interests in certain parts of the world there was a point of view strongly held in this country that would be adhered to with the tenacity which in such cases this country always manifested. His language was not unfriendly to the French or to any other Government, and he thought that by stating his views clearly he should not be endangering, but promoting good relations between the two countries.

*Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that after the satisfactory statement of the hon. Baronet he would withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

## THE APPOINTMENT OF SIR HERCULES ROBINSON.

*Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER said, that, in relation to the Vote for the Colonial Office, he wished to call attention to the appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson as High Commissioner for South Africa. He was desirous of not saying anything of a personal nature with regard to this difficult matter, but he thought the time had come when the question of this appointment should be brought before the House. It was time the House of Commons expressed some opinion as to the appointment. He had no interest, direct or indirect, in any matter connected with South Africa, and in view of that fact, he could speak with perfect freedom on this question. His point was that the appointment of Sir H. Robinson to succeed the late High Commissioner was one which should not have been made, and he would briefly state his reasons for taking that view. The position of the High Commissioner in South Africa always must be a peculiar one. He was not only High Commissioner of South Africa, but he was the Governor of Cape Colony, and, as such, he was absolutely compelled to accept the advice of his constitutional adviser—the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. They still further complicated the situation by making the High Commissioner the servant of the Cape Colony in his capacity as High Commissioner, because, by what appeared to him to be a very mistaken act of policy, they allowed the Cape Government to pay, he thought it was, £2,000 of the salary of the High Commissioner. Therefore, he was, in the most ordinary interpretation of the word, the servant, not only of this House and this country, but also of the Cape Colony and the Cape Government. This was a matter which he wished to touch with the greatest moderation, but it was well known to every Member of the House that the High Commissioner who had just been appointed was interested, or had been interested, to a very large extent in matters which were not political in South Africa and in the Cape Colony. It was a matter of common knowledge that Sir H. Robinson became, during his period of office at the Cape, deeply interested in commercial speculations at the Cape; that those commercial speculations were initiated and promoted by the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, and that the introduction of the High Commissioner to those speculations was owing to the action of the Prime Minister of Cape Colony. The Prime Minister was the most potent financial force in South Africa. He was, besides being Prime Minister, President of the Chartered Company, which controlled an enormous area in South Africa. He was also the chairman of the De Beers Company, one of the richest corporations in South Africa, and the chairman of a large number of subsidiary enterprises in that country. It was a matter to be greatly regretted that the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony should have these double functions, but it was a matter they were not concerned in. The Prime Minister was responsible to the Cape Parliament alone. But the position of the High Commissioner was a matter in which they were very much concerned. The High Commissioner returned home from South Africa, and he thereupon still further extended his interests in commercial speculations in South Africa. He became the chairman of the De Beers Concession in this country, and if he had been content to let the matter remain there and to give the benefit of his experience to those commercial undertakings in England, no one could have said a word. But he was now going back to South Africa with all these circumstances fresh in the memories of all the persons whom he came in contact with. What was the condition of South Africa at this moment? South Africa was simply rotten with Stock Exchange speculation. The Government of South Africa was now so bound up with the most sordid side of Throgmorton Street, that he believed the history of this country did not present anything like a parallel. Every single stick of property was being made the subject of gambling —property that did exist and property that did not exist. The whole thing was seething in the cauldron of Stock Exchange speculation. These circumstances ought to make us particularly careful as to the policy we adopted towards the country. They would be told, perhaps, that Sir Hercules Robinson had parted with all the interest he ever had in South African speculations. To his mind that was an irrelevant consideration; the fact remained that he was deeply indebted to those charged with the promotion of these enterprises, and he was going back to South Africa to be guided by the advice of a Minister who controlled all the springs of these speculations. It was not, therefore, a desirable appointment to make. There ought not to be even a suspicion that pecuniary considerations were put side by side with political considerations. Hon. Members would remember the Rudd Concession in the last administration of Sir Hercules Robinson, one which ought never to have been permitted in the interests of good Government in South Africa. That concession gave to Lobengula, in exchange for the mineral rights of a large area, £1,200 a year, and 1,000 rifles, and that at a time when the whole policy of the British Government in South Africa was to keep arms out of the hands of these savage tribes, and particularly out of the hands of Lobengula. In the recent Swaziland concession there had been a deliberate bargain between the High Commissioner's advisers and the Boers that the latter should not pass into the Chartered Company's territory in consideration of their refraining from doing what they had no right to do. That might have been perfect from the point of view of policy, but they had to look at the fact that the policy adopted was one which made it far easier to raise money for the Chartered Company in London at that time, than the alternative policy. However these concessions might be justified, it was open to any one to say that the true motive which prompted them both was not political expediency, but the financial excellency of the move. He had no personal feeling in the matter. He had a great respect for the ability of Sir Hercules Robinson; but he believed that he was speaking in the interests of the good government of our Empire. It might be said that the appointment was desired by the people of Cape Colony, speaking through the mouth of Mr. Rhodes, and that, therefore, there was no alternative selection; but surely we had not come so low that we could not find another man able to fill the post. He had made no search for these particulars, the facts to which he had referred were matters of common notoriety, and there was a party at the Cape—not the Dutch, but the English party—which was animated by a similar spirit to that which prompted him to bring forward the matter. He desired an assurance that this appointment should be reconsidered. It might be right and wise that a time should come when the Colonial Office should no longer have any power in such matters; but when it did, the Cape Colony should take its own responsibility, and this country ought not to take any responsibility which it could not take honourably. Our policy in the matter had not been in accordance with the traditions of Colonial administration. We were making a mistaken concession to what was believed to be the interests of peace and quiet between the Colonial Office and South Africa. If we could not play our part in South Africa according to our own traditions, we should stand aside and let the Cape Colony take this responsibility themselves. He spoke from no personal point of view or the point of view of pecuniary interest, but simply because he believed a mistake had been made, and he hoped the appointment would be reconsidered.

Sir W. HARCOURT reminded the Committee that it was necessary to get the Vote that night. Further discussion could take place on the report of Supply.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said, he had no fault to find with the tone adopted by the hon. Member who had brought forward this matter. He seemed to cast no blame either on Sir Hercules Robinson or the Colonial Office. He would endeavour, in a few words, to put before the House the position of the Colonial Office. When Sir H. Loch retired from Office as High Commissioner and Governor of the Cape, it became necessary to look round to see who should succeed him. It was essential in the very peculiar and delicate circumstances in South Africa to find not only a strong man, but a man of experience and knowledge of South Africa who had some knowledge of the past history and present position of affairs there. Certain names were considered by the Colonial Office, and, looking to Sir H. Robinson's former career in South Africa, his knowledge of existing questions there, the very independent attitude he took when High Commissioner before, and his great ability and intelligence, the Colonial Office came to the conclusion that he was the best man available for the post. His hon. Friend seemed to think the Colonial Office ignored the difficulties and questions he had just raised. He could assure him that they were as palpable to the Colonial Office authorities as to him. They considered them most carefully. As to Sir H. Robinson's position with regard to certain companies in South Africa, his hon. Friend had made a statement which he (Mr. Buxton) believed to be entirely erroneous. In a letter in *The Times* it was said that Sir H. Robinson placed large sums in different South African interests, while an High Commissioner before, on the suggestion of Mr. Rhodes. He was authorised to say—and he believed it was true — that neither directly nor indirectly had Sir H. Robinson and Mr. Rhodes had any business relations of any sort or kind either in the form of suggestion or recommendation or assistance in investments. As regarded the Chartered Company, Sir H. Robinson had held no shares whatever in it or in any subsidiary undertakings for some years. Since 1891 he had not been connected with any Rhodesian ventures in South Africa. The only pecuniary interest he had had there of late years had been as chairman of the De Beers Company and of the Standard Bank of South Africa. As to the bank there could be no question. As to the company, the Committee would recollect that if Sir Hercules Robinson had desired to use any undue influence, he would have been unable to do so, because, as Governor of the Cape, he must act under the advice of the Cape Ministers. Therefore, neither directly nor indirectly could he have any influence of the kind; and he had had no pecuniary interest in South Africa of late years which could in any way incapacitate him from being High Commissioner. As regarded the implication that influence had been brought to bear upon the Government to appoint Sir H. Robinson, he could only say that no such influence had been brought to bear. The Government had appointed him because they believed him to be the man most suited in the peculiar circumstances for that position, and that he was in no sense incapacitated for being an impartial and independent High Commissioner. The appointment was a very important one indeed, and the Government felt that they ought to appoint a man who was above suspicion; they believed that in Sir H. Robinson they had a man above suspicion, one who would be able to carry out their policy in South Africa, who would, on the whole, be acceptable in South Africa, and who would be absolutely independent of any influence direct or indirect; and they thanked him for having patriotically parted with all his interests in South Africa in order to undertake this onerous duty.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have never understood why it is necessary that this Vote should be taken to-night. [Sir W. Harcourt was understood to say it really was so.] If that be the case, if there is really no possible alternative, my own recommendation to my hon. Friend would be that he should withdraw the Motion and raise the question again on the Report. There is no doubt the matter cannot stand where it has just been left by the Under Secretary. It is a matter of the very utmost importance, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has recognised, and it must be fully discussed. I will not stand in the way of the Vote; but I should like to say a word on what the Under Secretary has just said. He admits that the objections to the appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson were palpable, and asserts that they were fully considered by the Government; he actually almost makes it a matter of credit to the Government and boasts that, in spite of these apparent objections, they have, nevertheless, appointed a man who, of all others, is fittest for the position. I may admit with him that in no conceivable circumstances will Sir Hercules Robinson be improperly influenced by his previous connection with these speculations; but something more than that is expected of a person who is appointed to represent the Queen in a Colonial Government. It is not only necessary that he should be pure, but, like Cæsar's wife, he must not be suspected. I pay no special attention to the correspondence in *The Times* of this morning beyond this, that it shows the strong feeling on the part of one political Party in the Cape that suspicion will be against the future decisions of Sir Hercules Robinson in consequence of his connection with these financial affairs. The Under Secretary says—

> "Oh, but what is his connection? He is not connected with the Chartered Company."

Does he mean that that would be a disability, and would he still have appointed him even if he had been connected with the Chartered Company? I suppose, if credit is taken for his not being connected with the Chartered Company, he admits, that if Sir Hercules Robinson had been connected with it, that would have been a serious objection. Then, is it not a serious objection to have been connected with the De Beers Company? It is not an ordinary company; it is a great financial undertaking, dealing with enormous funds, which have been used again and again for political purposes, used publicly for political purposes and to carry out political aims, which may be, and, I am inclined to believe, are, very worthy aims; but still, nevertheless, you have got this distinct and definite connection; and you cannot regard the De Beers Company as if it were an ordinary business. It is a compromising connection for anybody who has to undertake the position of impartial arbitrator between various parties in South Africa. I must say say that if I had, as I have, some doubt of the propriety of this appointment, I have now, after hearing their defence, no doubt whatever as to the mischievous character of the precedent the Government are setting up. In what they have done, they are breaking down the traditions and rules of this generation; at any rate I would ask the Under Secretary what are the regulations of the office with which he is connected? Are they not of the strictest character, and are they not all intended to preserve the character of those who are engaged in the Government of our Colonies as persons against whom suspicion cannot breathe a word as to their absolute impartiality? Yet, here is a case in which it is acknowledged by the Under Secretary that the Government were aware that this particular gentleman was connected in an important capacity to one of the greatest financial undertakings in South Africa. In spite of that the Government propose to send him out not merely as Governor of the Cape Colony, but also as representing Her Majesty in the position of High Commissioner. I think we owe an obligation to the hon. Member for bringing the matter before the Committee, and I hope it will not be disposed of until it has been much more fully discussed.

MR. F. G. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said, he wished to ask only one question. Was the Committee to understand that the De Beers Company was the only company in South Africa with which Sir Hercules Robinson had been connected?

MR. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.) remarked, that it was a matter of great surprise that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who had been a responsible Minister in that House, should lend himself to the unworthy action of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast. The hon. Gentleman had spoken about the good government of the Empire. Did he think that the Colonies of this Empire were to be retained or the Empire well governed by standing up in the House of Commons and making a disgraceful attack on a gentleman just appointed to go out to an important Colony, and occupy a high position. This was an attempt to handicap Sir Hercules Robinson in the great task he had before him. If the hon. Member for West Belfast had the charge of these matters, in a very short time there would not be a single Colony attached to the Crown.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON, replying to the hon. Member for Peckham, said, that he was assured by Sir Hercules Robinson that, as regarded his interests in South Africa, while some few years ago he held some few shares in the Chartered Company, and subsidiary company, he had parted with them some time since. He had also held shares in the Standard Bank and the De Beers Company, but those he had parted with on his appointment being made.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY said, there were a great number of important points which ought to be discussed. They could not be brought on in the ordinary Estimates because they never came before the House. To-morrow they would not be able to divide on more than one question because, by the Rules of the House with regard to the Report of Supply only enabled the House to divide once. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would put down a second Vote so as to enable hon. Members to raise the points they wished to discuss?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will do what I can, but the hon. Member must not expect me to pledge myself at the present moment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn; Vote agreed to.

Progress reported.

## ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

The House went into Committee on this Bill.

Mr. MELLOR in the Chair.

Clause 1 agreed to.

On Clause 2,

MR. A. C. MORTON pointed out that the clause said—

> "The Army Act shall be, and remain, in force during the periods hereinafter mentioned."

The incorporation of this Act, 44 & 45 Vic., c. 58, in this Bill caused an immense amount of confusion. Could not the Act be recited in the Bill so that those interested in this legislation might be put in a position to understand it without difficulty?

THE CHAIRMAN asked whether the hon. Member was about to move an Amendment? At present there was no question before the House.

*MR. A. C. MORTON explained that he was asking a question. Whether he moved an Amendment or not depended upon the information which might be given him.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. Member if he wishes to ask a question must do so on the motion that the clause stand part of the Blll.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES moved to leave out on page 2, line 28, the words "30th day of April" in order to insert "31st day of May." He explained that the effect of the Amendment would be to reduce the interval between the time when the Act expired in this country and the time of its expiry elsewhere in Europe. At present the interval every year between the expiry of the Act in the United Kingdom, and its expiry in Malta, Gibraltar, &c., was three months. His Amendment would reduce the interval to two months. If it were agreed to they would not in future have to discuss this Bill at a time when there was a great pressure of financial business. They would be able to discuss it after Easter, and there would be another month in which to consider it. He believed that the change would be convenient, and he proposed it in no spirit of hostility either to the Government or to the Act.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) said, he did not know whether the hon. Member really moved the Amendment seriously. It was moved last year, and they discussed all the changes that were proposed in regard to dates. They were fixed a few year ago, and no inconvenience had arisen from them. He, therefore, saw no advantage in changing them. It was very undesirable that there should be any considerable time after the commencement of the financial year, for which the men were voted, before any changes in the law came into operation.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, that as the right hon. Member did not see his way to accept the Amendment he would not press it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he wished now to deal with the point to which he had already referred. The Army Act, which he maintained was incoporated in this Bill, was passed 13 years ago. In that period a great many clauses had been repealed; and for all he knew, some might have been added. Some parts of the Army Act were at variance with the Army Annual Act, and when a question in regard to the allowances mentioned in the Schedule of the Act came before the Public Accounts Committee about a fortnight ago it was found that the Auditor General understood the Act in one way and the Representative of the War Office understood it in another way. After considerable discussion it was found that there was a third way, and that the War Office proceeded under some rule which was neither in the Army Act nor the Army Annual Act. In some countries, notably the United States, it was part of the Constitution of some of the States—that every Act or part of an Act incorporated in a new Bill should be recited. He thought the time had arrived when a similar course should be followed in this country. He was glad to notice that Lord Salisbury had in another place taken some steps in that direction. He did not want to take up the time of the House at that hour (12.10 a.m.), but he was sorry the Bill had not been brought on at an earlier hour. A Bill like this, which affected the well-being and comfort of many thousands of soldiers, ought to be discussed before

12 o'clock. He trusted his right hon. Friend would give them a promise that the matter would be considered, and that next year, at any rate, he would recite the Army Act or any other Act he wished to incorporate in the Bill.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it was not a case of incorporating any Act in the Bill. The course adopted was to save re-enacting and quoting clause by clause year after year. It was many years ago felt that there should be a fixed Act and that there should be an annual Bill. The Act would expire unless it was revived in this annual Act, but that was not incorporation in the ordinary sense. If there was any inconsistency between the Acts that would be amended, when it was discovered, by this Bill. His hon. Friend had an advantage, as he was a member of the Public Accounts Committee. When he saw the report of that Committee he promised him that if there was any misunderstanding or ambiguity it should be put right in the proper way. There was no longer any reason why any one connected with the Army need be ignorant of the law.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON asked how was any one to know that the Army Act had been altered?

*Sir ARTHUR HAYTER said, there was no mistake in connection with the Public Accounts Committee that the Secretary of State need look into. The mistake was on the part of the hon. Member for Peterborough. The Army Act directed that the Innkeeper should provide a hot meal for every Soldier on march; the War Office prescribed by Regulation that, if halted, the limit of this provision should be three days for each soldier. After that time the soldier was to provide for his rations, as in barracks, out of his pay. The confusion in the Public Accounts Committee, and in the hon. Member for Peterborough's mind, was between the provision in the Army Act, and the War Office regulation.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON denied the statement of his hon. Friend with reference to what took place before the Public Accounts Committee. He asked how would the soldier know that there had been any alteration made in the Army Act?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the soldier knew it because the Bill became law, and anything in it affecting the Army Act was incorporated in the copies of the Act which were in possession of the regiment, but the Amendments were trifling and not of very material concern to the interests of the soldier.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON: Do I understand that these alterations are sent round to each regiment?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Certainly.

Clause agreed to, as was also Clause 3.

On Clause 4.

*Mr. R. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) moved an Amendment repealing "Sub-section (4) of Section 96 of the Army Act." His reason for doing so was because the sub-section produced hardship in many cases and was of no use as far as recruiting was concerned. In enlisting lads who had been apprenticed after 16 years of age the military authorities were not bound to give them up on application of the master; after a youth had reached 21, the Army authorities were not bound to give them up, and to the latter he had no objection. A lad apprenticed after the age of 16, if he did not like his work, could snap his fingers at his master, and the master had nothing more to say. This produced great loss, because a master had to provide the apprentice with a kit and often to maintain him for one or two years, and just as he was becoming useful to him, the apprentice could go away and leave his master in the lurch. He knew a case in which a boy was apprenticed to the master of a fishing smack. He had an accident, and was in hospital for many months, where the master maintained him at a cost of £10 or £12. When he came out he enlisted in the Army, and the master could only get him back by purchasing his discharge at a cost of £10. He did not think it was right that the War Office should connive at an apprentice breaking his contract. Recruits were wanted not only in quantities, but of good quality, and it must be a very bad recommendation on a man coming to enlist that he should already have deserted from private employment. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would either accept the

Amendment or, at all events raise the age from 16 to 17 or 18.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the question of dealing with the case of alleged apprenticeship was of course a matter of public interest. It was very undesirable to interfere with genuine and legitimate apprentices, but, on the other hand, they must guard against apprenticeships of an imaginary or false order being pleaded in favour of the discharge of a man who had been legitimately enlisted. It was to prevent that that the regulations were so strict. His attention was only called by the Amendment to the particular case in which the hon. Gentleman was interested. He would look carefully into the matter to see whether there was good ground for the lenient action which the hon. Gentleman required. But until he had looked into the case and saw how the regulation worked, he was not prepared to have it altered. Its object was to prevent the defeating of the recruiting regulations by collusion in the matter of apprentices.

*MR. R. MALLOCK said, he had not brought forward the matter simply in relation to the case he had mentioned, but the regulation had been found of great inconvenience in his constituency, as they were situated not far from a garrison town where there was a temptation to apprentices to enlist.

The Amendment was by leave withdrawn.

Clauses 4, 5, 6 and 7 were added to the Bill without Amendment.

On Clause 8.

*THE CHAIRMAN ruled out of Order the following Amendments put down by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury):—

Page 3, line 24, before "In section," insert "In section 180, sub-section 2 (a), after the words 'being natives of India,' shall be inserted 'except that the punishment of flogging shall no longer be inflicted under such Indian military law.'"

"And in sub-section 2 (b), after the words 'articles or other matters,' shall be inserted 'except any articles or regulations which provide for the infliction of the punishment of flogging,' and after the words 'are saving,' shall be inserted 'in co-operation with other forces of Her Majesty.'"

MR. HANBURY said, he would move to omit the whole of Section 180, which would secure the object he had in view. That was to abolish flogging in the Indian Army. Flogging had been abolished in all the other branches of Her Majesty's Army; but it still prevailed in the Indian Army.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that he is now moving the same Amendment though in a different form. It is to the substance of the Amendment that I object, and not to its form. The Amendment proposes to extend the scope of the original Act to the Indian Army by an Amendment of the Annual Mutiny Bill, and that can only be done by a separate Bill.

MR. HANBURY asked whether it was not within his power to omit the whole of Section 180?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The natives of India are under their own laws and Articles of War, and to make so great an alteration as the hon. Gentleman proposes in the original Act would be out of order. It can only be done by a separate Measure.

MR. HANBURY said, that if it were in Order he would move to omit the words "Natives of India" from Section 180. It would then enable him to raise the question, with a distinction between the natives of India and the other troops.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The reason given by the hon. Gentleman may be a perfectly good reason for amending the law, but it must be done by a separate Measure. To do it here would, in my judgment, be out of Order.

MR. HANBURY: I do not want to resist your ruling in any way, but the point is this. If I may quote the language of the Section, it says:—

> "Nothing in this Act shall prejudice or affect the Indian Military Law respecting officers, soldiers, or followers in Her Majesty's Indian forces being natives of India."

I do not in any way wish to alter the Indian Military Law, but I do not want the exemption created by this Act to continue. That exemption is created entirely by this Act, and is not a portion of the Indian Law.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I quite understand the point taken by the hon.

Gentleman, and I quite understand his object. But I was pointing out to him that what he desires to have done must be done by a separate Measure. To do that by this Act would be to extend the scope of the Act—the very thing which is excluded by the Section in question. I think, therefore, it is out of order.

Clauses 7, 8 and 9 were added to the Bill.

On the question that the Schedule stand part of the Bill,

COLONEL NOLAN moved the omission of the words, providing that the payment for a soldier's breakfast "so specified" should be a penny half-penny. The price of three half-pence for the breakfast of a soldier when on march was much too low. It was not sufficient to enable the soldier to obtain a proper substantial meal, or else if he was supplied with a decent meal for such a sum, it meant that the licensed victualler, who so supplied it, must lose on the transaction.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN had more than once explained that these different rates were fixed some years ago, and the penny half-penny was never intended to buy the full breakfast of a soldier, but was only intended as a contribution towards it. This was an extra allowance, and it was never intended that the soldier should not pay more for his breakfast if he chose to do so. Originally, no allowance was made, and then this sum of a penny half-penny was introduced.

COLONEL NOLAN asked what did the Secretary of State for War expect a soldier would get for a breakfast for which such a small sum as three half-pence was paid?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: He will get 1½d. worth more than he would have got if he had not the 1½d.

COLONEL NOLAN pointed out that the soldier was not likely to get a good breakfast if the Secretary for War did not even know what he ought to get. If the right hon. Gentleman did not know, the officers would not know, and nobody would know. This was a most niggardly allowance, and ought to receive attention.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that, when on the march, the soldier ordered what, to the best of his judgment, was good for him. Half-a-pound of bread and a cup of tea would be provided for him for 1½d. If he wanted anything more toothsome he could pay for it himself.

COLONEL NOLAN said that half-a-pound of bread would cost ¾d., and he did not think a good cup of tea could be got for ¾d. They now knew from the Secretary for War what was considered sufficient for the breakfast of a soldier.

*MR. A. C. MORTON hoped that the Secretary of State would take this matter into consideration. He would remind his right hon. Friend that soldiers and their friends now had the Franchise. They wanted, and would insist on having, better treatment than they had ever had up till now. His right hon. Friend had better give way on these points, as these soldiers, and especially their friends, would have a Vote at the next Election. He trusted that the Committee might have some satisfactory assurance from his right hon. Friend.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD repudiated what the last speaker had said. However discontented a soldier might be, he would not use his vote against discipline.

MR. J. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, N.W.) pointed out that, in the second portion of the Schedule, he saw no mention of breakfast.

*MR. A. C. MORTON explained that he did not intend to say what the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Lockwood) had said. His contention was, that a private soldier, now he had a Vote, would be in a position to insist on better treatment than he had ever had before. He said nothing about discipline, which was another question altogether.

COLONEL NOLAN said he did not wish to trouble the Committee to divide, and he asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule and Preamble agreed to, and Bill reported without Amendments.

## REGISTERS OF ELECTORS (DUPLICATE ENTRIES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. W. Sidebottom, Bill to amend the Law respecting Duplicate Entries on Registers of Electors.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 18th April, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

## NAVY (SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME 1889-90).

Return ordered, arranged under the heads given on page 3 of the Memorandum of the Secretary of the Admiralty, dated the 8th day of March 1889 (Parliamentary Paper No. 67, of Session 1889), revised by Memorandum of the 2nd day of April, 1892 (Parliamentary Paper No. 133, of Session 1892), giving—

1st. In regard to the 38 ships intended by the New Programme to be built in Her Majesty's Dockyard, in Italics, in comparison with the estimated expenditure therein shown, the actual expenditure under each head for each of the years therein contained, giving also with reference to the anticipated difference of £3,054,000, therein said to be available "for laying down new vessels, or in reducing the Estimates for the years 1892–3 and 1893–4," information as to what sums were applied to either of these two purposes respectively:—

| | | 1889–90. | 90–91. | 1891-2. | 1892-3. | 1893-4. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Vote 8.<br>Amount appropriated to New Construction ... ... ... | Estimated | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 13,250,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | |
| Less,—Amount required to complete ships in progress ... ... | Estimated | 1,290,000 | 256,000 | — | — | — | 1,546,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | |
| Amount available for New Programme ... ... ... | Estimated | 1,360,000 | 2,394,000 | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 2,650,000 | 11,704.000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | |
| Vote 9.<br>Ordnance amount appropriated for armaments of New Vessels ... ... ... ... | Estimated | 450,000 | 600,000 | 600,000 | 600,000 | 600,000 | 2,850,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | |
| Total ... ... ... | Estimated | 1,810,000 | 2,994,000 | 3,250,000 | 3,250,000 | 3,250,000 | 14,554,000 |
| | Actu | | | | | | |
| Estimated Expenditure on New Programme, including Ordnance and Warlike Stores ... ... ... ... | Estimated | 1,810,000 | 2,940,000 | 3,160,000 | 2,250,000 | 1,340,000 | 11,500,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | |

Difference { Estimated £3,054,000
Actual

The difference between the amounts available for New Construction, &c., viz., £14,554,000, and the sums required to complete the New Programme, viz., £11,500,000, can be either utilised in laying down New Vessels, or in reducing the Estimates for the years 1892-3, 1893-4.

2nd. In regard to the 32 Ships included in the New Programme, to be constructed by Contract, similar information in Italics as to the actual Expenditure on the services therein referred to in comparison with the estimated Expenditure:—

| | | 1889-90. | 1890-91. | 1891-2. | 1892-3. | 1893-4 | 1894-5. | 1895-6. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Amount available out of the proposed Naval Defence Acc'nt | Estimated | 1,428,000 | 1,428,000 | 1,428,000 | 1,428,000 | 1,428,000 | 1,428,000 | 1,432,000 | 10,000,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | | | |
| Estimated Expenditure ... | Estimated | 2,845,000 | 4,415,000 | 1,900,000 | 740,000 | 100 000 | – | – | 10,000,000 |
| | Actual | | | | | | | | |

—(*Sir Edward Reed.*)

**House adjourned at Ten Minutes before One o'clock.**

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Friday, 29th March 1895.*

## HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

The first Report of the Select Committee on the House of Lords Offices was received.

## JOINT COMMITTEE OF BOTH HOUSES.

THE **LORD CHANCELLOR** (Lord HERSCHELL) moved :—

> "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider in what manner such inconvenience as arises from Legislation by reference in Acts of Parliament to prior enactments can best be avoided."

He said, the Motion required no explanation, for it was the outcome of a discussion which took place a day or two ago on a Motion by the Marquess of Salisbury.

Motion agreed to.

## SHOP HOURS BILL.

The Shop Hours Bill passed through Committee without amendment.

## ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

On Motion of the EARL OF **MOUNT EDGCUMBE**, Bill read 2ª.

## THE EDUCATION CODE.

*LORD **NORTON** rose

> "To call attention to the new edition of the Education Code, which will become law at the end of this week."

He said, he thought Parliament ought now to take some notice of the annual additions made to the Code. Year by year modifications were introduced which became law by the simple process of incubation on the Table of the House for 40 days. There had been no fewer than 37 additions to the Code since he himself first codified the accumulated Minutes of Council which he found in the office in 1858; the Code was revised by Lord Sherbrooke, and it then fought an arduous way up to the Act of 1870. The edition of the Code just produced included alterations, some important and some apparently only verbal, which filled an Appendix of 20 pages. The Code had now grown to nearly 100 pages, besides instructions which filled 70 pages more. He would ask their Lordships to consider how much of the time of the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses must be taken up in studying this ever-changing voluminous Code. The apparently verbal alterations in this instance were not quite so insignificant as might at first sight appear. Several of them had been the subjects of questions in the House of Commons to ascertain what they meant, and recently a deputation of publishers of school books to the Department bitterly complained that the requirements of the new Code would render obsolete all the present accepted school books on history. He would only say of the minor alterations that they were calculated by their number to be a hindrance to national education rather than otherwise. Of the larger alterations he would refer to two, both of which he thought were great improvements. The first was the inspection of schools without notice. No formal fixed inspection ever found a school in its normal state. An annual stated inspection might be necessary for obvious reasons, but the surprise visit was a good addition, because it would give Parliament and the Department a more accurate view of the normal condition of the schools. The whole system of Government inspection required revision and simplification, duplicated as it was, by the larger School Boards having their own Inspectors besides. The other larger alteration in the Code to which he wished to call attention was even more important, and certainly beneficial—namely, the introduction of Schedule S, which was a scheme for small schools, and with it he would couple the new facilities given to obtaining masters and mistresses suitable for those small country schools. This was at last a recognition that all schools could not be treated alike, and that a line must be drawn between elementary and secondary instruction. Ever since the Act of 1870 the definition of Elementary Education had been trespassed over surreptitiously, the object being an unobserved stretch of the elementary undertaking, instead of avowedly and properly getting Parliamentary sanction for higher public schools. At present subjects of instruction, from reading words of one syllable up to classics, mechanics, and foreign languages, formed one syllabus for all schools, only classified under the three heads, obligatory, optional, and specific. No definition was given of the proffered subjects of instruction except as of those for which grants were paid, and this mode of definition came of the degraded notion of national education by payment on results, a system which happily was now almost entirely abolished. An excellent comparison between English and German schools, made by the Secretary of the Birmingham School Board, described the English standards of instruction as merely mechanical tests to enable Inspectors to assign grants from the Treasury, while the German standards were a syllabus of work arranged in suitable stages of instructional adaptation. Lord Taunton's Commission drew attention, in its celebrated Report, drawn up by the present Bishop of London, to the right distinction between school grades, and the necessity of education being adapted to each grade. It also referred to a still more important distinction, which had been greatly lost sight of—that between general education and special apprenticeship to work of any kind. All those distinctions had been confused. The new edition of the Code illustrated this last confusion by adding cottage gardening to the specific subjects of general instruction, which also included amongst sciences, cookery, laundry, and dairy work, subjects which were no part of general education. This confusion, bad as it was, was worse confounded by handing over half a million a year to the County Councils throughout the country to undertake technical instruction. The necessity of concentrating the several departments connected with education had been strongly urged, but here was a strange addition to Whitehall, South Kensington, the Charity Commission, and the Home Office undertaking of industrial schools, the only public technical schools we had. The Royal Commission on Secondary Education promised a speedy Report, in which it was understood this confusion of education would be a main topic. The present system was wasteful, conflicting, and obstructive of many better kinds of undertaking. Mr. Mather, M.P. for Salford, in his great engineering works, had for many years provided technical instruction for the younger among his workmen, and it was only after he despaired of his example being generally followed that he gave in his support to the legislation on the subject which had mischievously superseded such private enterprise. At all events, it was high time to reduce to something like a national system the miscellaneous schemes of county councils to dispose of their half-million a year. The report of the Primate's Committee, of which Lord Cross was chairman, laid great stress on the necessity of drawing the line between elementary and secondary education. These considerations seemed to support two main improvements; first, the enormous advantage the country would derive from having a distinct Minister of Education, under whom all the ever-multiplying departments would be concentrated and systematised; and, secondly, the cessation of annual editions of the Code. Continuity and certainty were more important than even improvements incessantly pouring in. Alterations required from time to time should be subjects of Minutes of Council, and immediately presented for sanction to Parliament. There was such unanimity in this view that the Government might now express their readiness to adopt it. He hoped he had not unduly called attention to the delegated legislation of a Department largely using the name of Parliament.

*EARL FORTESCUE said, he had no such claim to their Lordships' indulgence as his noble Friend, who had the double honour of being the first to codify the multitudinous minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, and also to codify the various Sanitary Acts, to the great advantage of the public. He could only plead his deep interest in education for over half-a-century, and especially in primary and secondary education, both of which were materially affected by this Code. He had the satisfaction of congratulating the Government and the country this year again on a decided approach to conformity with the dictates of fairness and common sense, with which earlier Codes were so long and persistently at variance. If any example of that was necessary it would be found in the system of payment by results, which was the cause of so much worry to the teachers and over-pressure to some children, and so much impediment to the progress of other brighter or more industrious children. That was happily abolished not long ago. He pointed out that, in regard to the system of inspection, surprise visits were not an absolute novelty, because they had been introduced by his noble relative when at the Board of Education, and with great success. In the days of payment by results, most of the grant to the school was determined by the number of children who passed from one standard to another. Now, instead of the grant mainly depending on that, it depended on the report of the inspector on the general state and efficiency of the school. Under the present Code the children might be taught in different classes different subjects, instead of being expected to make exactly the same progress year after year in each of what were popularly known as the three R's. They further found that the proficiency formerly exacted in grammar, parsing, and spelling—which he had always thought occupied a disproportionate amount of the limited time that could be devoted to all studies, by the children, had been wisely diminished. As one who had always advocated drilling for all boys in schools—from the Duke's son to the pauper's — he saw, with great satisfaction, the strong, and at the same time, reasonable recommendations in favour of drill and physical exercises. Then he must mention last, but by no means the least welcome, the introduction of a really distinct system of study applicable to small schools. On the whole they had great reason to be grateful for these improvements. But he must be allowed to say the Department still announced its requirements in too positive a tone, whether those requirements were in accord, or at variance with previous requirements. He could give various instances. Here was one. For many years the Department, autocratically laid down, eight feet square of floor space, and 80 cubic feet per child in habitual attendance as the minimum admissible for schools and class rooms. The Department had now no less autocratically, required that it should be ten feet instead of eight, and this without condescending to give any reasons, much less to quote any professional expert's opinion in support of the changes. *Sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas.* And requirements intimated in that way were rather apt to predispose to objection in stead of willing assent. He would not say of the Department as was said of a celebrated Professor at Cambridge, in his day, that science was its *forte*; but he would say that omniscience was still, as it had been, its foible. To give one instance. They were startled some years ago, at the Exeter Diocesan Conference, by learning that he thought the excessive cost of the board of students at the Training College had been augmented, because the Government Inspector had ordered that the students there should have beer. He (Earl Fortescue) never heard that Inspector's name. No doubt he took a high University degree, but he felt confident that Inspector had not taken a degree in medicine, or had any claim to be reckoned an authority on diet. He gave this order in a diocese at that time presided over by the present Bishop of London, who was a rigid total abstainer, and an exceptionally good pedestrian, and was then able to outwalk almost every one of his clergy. On the whole, however, this imperative and autocratic tone had been very much mitigated, and there was a very gratifying approach (especially in the instructions to Inspectors) this year, to the considerate and conciliatory tone of a highly successful administrator, who was, too early, lost to his country, his (Lord Fortescue's) distinguished chief and lamented friend, Mr. Charles Buller. He remembered shortly after their installation at the newly constituted Poor Law Board—he as its first President and himself as its Secretary—that Mr. Buller said he thought the Board should seek to be influential rather than authoritative, that it should try to enlist the sense and feelings of the Guardians in favour of its requirements, instead of too freely resorting to its legal powers. They accordingly adopted that line in their official cummunications and with this result, that at the end of the year he was complimented in Parliament and also in the Press on the much more reasonable and lenient administration of Poor Law, whereas, as a matter of fact, they had suppressed various abuses and checked a good deal of mischievous laxity. But they did it almost entirely by letters of courteous remonstrance to the Guardians with appeals to the results of experience, and very rarely by the exercise of the really very extensive statutory authority of the Board. Their immediate predecessors, who were rather ungracious in their communications, incurred much odium, and yet acquiesced, passively, in a good deal of laxity, and not seldom timidly gave way when they were boldly, not to say insolently, resisted. He would only say further, that he thought the recent structural requirements—and it was to them he more especially referred when commenting on the absence of reasons or the citation of the authority of experts on the subject—these seemed to him to be not unreasonable. But he had heard complaints of their rapid fulfilment being somewhat harshly urged or enforced upon Voluntary schools in these times of general depression. Speaking of the general depression, this certainly was an unfortunate time to impose the expense of the purchase of a large number of new books upon the ratepayers (but more especially on the subscribers to Voluntary schools), owing to a slight change in the system of teaching history. He had very little doubt that it was a judicious change, and that the teaching of history a good deal by biographies of celebrated men was likely to leave a more lasting impression on young minds than any other way. But he hoped great forbearance would be exercised, and that a change necessitating the purchase of new books might be gradually and considerately effected. He could not speak of voluntary schools without just saying that he felt the flagrant injustice with which they were treated in being compelled to pay rates when the self-denying subscriptions paid in their support were the means of effecting a great saving in the rates. He thought also that the 17s. 6d. limit could only be considered a fine on efficiency, provided it was conjoined with poverty. The hardship of that seemed to him to be very gross indeed. Then there was one example of what he believed to be religious inequality—of course, maintained in the name of religious liberty—he meant the positive exclusion of Ministers of the Established Church of England and presumably also of Scotland—though their doctrines were not alike in every particular—from posts which seemed to be legally open to Nonconformist ministers. With regard to secondary education, he would only say that the degree to which it was materially affected by this and by previous Codes seemed to him to be undeniable. He agreed with the Bishop of London that the schools which were called advanced elementary schools ought more properly to be called non-elementary schools, and grants in support of them were a most undesirable way of giving aid from the public purse to secondary education. There were named in the Code no fewer than 20 specific subjects; and, having read the names of 14 of them, he asked their Lordships what subjects of study were left for secondary education, or, indeed, for University education, except Greek, Hebrew, and a few other ancient languages, a certain number of modern ones, and some unenumerated sciences, such as astronomy and biology. Even the 20 subjects were liable to be added to, because other subjects than those named might, if sanctioned by the Department, be taken as specific subjects, on certain conditions. As one who had taken a lifelong interest in, and devoted much attention, time and money to, primary and secondary education, he had always protested, and he must again protest, against what he could not call a system, but what was really an anomalous, costly, and erroneous mode of applying public aid and public regulations to what was miscalled elementary education in what were miscalled elementary schools.

*The BISHOP of LONDON said, it seemed to him that, on the whole, the new Code was a very good Code, and its authors deserved the thanks of all those who were interested in education for the care that had been taken to make a variety of small but nevertheless really valuable improvements. There were details in it which he confessed, were rather objectionable, but they were matters of detail. For instance, there was too much concession to that spirit of the time which wanted to teach everybody everything, which meant teaching everybody a little of everything, and very often led on to teaching nobody very much of anything. This was the tendency of too much of our education in the present day, because there were many who desired to promote and improve education in every possible way and few who understood how to do it. The consequence was that encouragement was given to things which did not improve it at all. He did not like the compulsory addition, in Standards I., II., and III., of object lessons and of some one suitable occupation. He did not say it was a bad thing children should have these; but what they had to do already was quite enough for them. If we wanted to make any addition it should be something which would stand the children in good stead through life, which would drill them in the use of their understandings, and not a number of trivial things, which might be very good in their way, but which took up too much time. The great number of specific subjects had been mentioned, and although they were not compulsory, still they distracted attention; and it would be better to leave much of this instruction to the teachers, to be given voluntarily, if they liked, without paying grants to them for it. He did not object to a teacher, if he had a fancy for a particular study, devoting a part of his time and that of his scholars to the subject; and very often he could do a great deal of good in that way; but to pay him for doing it was quite another matter. If he had separate payment for teaching separate subjects, the concentration of thought upon them distracted attention from the general course of school instruction, and the teaching of them almost compelled him to damage the organisation of the school for the purpose. Meanwhile, the scientific instruction given in elementary schools was not worth anything; it could not be thorough because there was not time enough for it. It was a sort of dilettante kind of knowledge that was obtained, superficial knowledge that would make a little show in conversation with friends, but not valuable knowledge based upon exact information and strict reasoning. No doubt this was acceptable to people generally, who were for teaching everybody everything on earth. Public opinion, as it was called, would be against him; but a man who had actual work to do was not much influenced by public opinion on a matter which belonged to experts. It was a good thing to teach history by means of biographies, and in that respect the Code was improved; but it was necessary to look at the cost It was a serious thing to require school managers suddenly to buy a large number of new books. That was not all; for the National Society got good books written by authors who were specially competent; and, if such books were to be suddenly rendered useless, not only was a burden thrown on managers, but the profits of authors were cut off, and there would be difficulty in getting books written in future. Some of the new rules relating to improvements in buildings were very severe if they were intended to be applied to schools already in existence. It was ordered, for example, that—

> "The vegetable soil within the area of the building should be removed, the whole space covered by a layer of concrete not less than 6 in. thick, and air bricks inserted in opposite walls to insure a thorough current of air under floors for ventilation to joists."

This was not a bad recommendation when you were building a school; but, if it were to be enforced on a school already in existence, it would be a very difficult thing to do, and it would cost a great deal of money. Therefore the condition ought not to be imposed on managers whose schools have been already approved by the Department. As far as he could see, the Code did not say whether these rules were to be applied to schools now in existence within a short time. He supposed he was not a very hard critic when he said that the Department had contrived somehow or other to alarm people with the fear that they wanted to drive this matter very fast. The Department ought to try to carry the managers with them, and to show them that these things were being done for the good of their schools, and that they were not being bullied. A little gentle pressure would do a great deal in that way. He thought a substitution of surprise visits for the present fixed visits was a very doubtful proposal. To have surprise visits was an excellent thing, but to substitute them for the ordinary parade day was by no means likely to encourage masters to do their best. A school was a very highly organised piece of machinery which must be worked by definite rules and definite hours, and, though he thought surprise visits were very useful, the regular visits ought not to be superseded. There was one thing more he wished very much to have something like an explanation of. A passage occurred in the Code in which it was stated—

> "In order that a school may be properly organised it should be arranged that the number of children habitually present at any one time under the instruction of a teacher," etc.

What was meant by "habitually present at any one time"? He could understand average attendances, that was definite enough; but he could not follow what was intended by the expression he had quoted. This was a matter that ought to have been worded in such a way as to enable teachers and managers generally to understand it without difficulty. Therefore he would be very glad if an explanation were given and published in some way as speedily as possible. He wished to express his gratitude for two things which he thought would be a very great relief. The scheme for small schools was exceptionally good, and would do a great deal of real service. Of course, as time went on, it might be that the details of the scheme might want some amendment, but as it stood he did not think a better scheme could have been launched. The other matter, which deserved the gratitude of all school managers, was the relief given to those who were wishing for assistant teachers. They would get them with much greater ease in consequence of the new regulation allowing those who had passed through certain specified, well-known Examinations, such as the Local Oxford and Cambridge Examinations, to go into schools and work as assistant teachers. That would certainly be a relief to a great many small schools, and he thought it was probable that teachers of a somewhat higher social rank would be obtained. That, he thought, would be a great gain to elementary education, though that was, perhaps, not a very democratic thing to say. It was a very great gain to employ those who from their earliest years had been accustomed to a cultivated atmosphere of thought and conversation, and always accustomed to something like a position of command. They found discipline very much easier in consequence, and their mode of teaching was distinctly very much better than was usual. That was all he had to say about the Code, but he wished very much to emphasise what had been already said about the importance of distinctly defining the work which elementary schools were to do. For that purpose it was absolutely necessary that there should be an organised system of secondary education, and he welcomed with great satisfaction the appointment of a Royal Commission which was to report on that matter, and he hoped that when once that Report appeared as little time as possible would be lost in legislating upon the subject, in such a way as to make it no longer possible to say that advanced education must be given in elementary schools because there were no other schools in which to give it. There ought to be other schools. It spoilt elementary schools when they had to take in such an enormous range. If it were possible he would like to get the elementary schools back to their proper work. They would do it very much better if relieved from the present tendency to be always stepping up into something else; and for the sake of the elementary schools, quite as much as for the sake of the secondary schools, he wished that a scheme of secondary schools could be formed as speedily as possible. Education was a thing which really depended on organisation; and the teaching of boys, if it was to be efficient, turned very much on how they were put into their classes, what their subjects were to be, and how they were to be taught. When he was at Rugby he found this invariable mark of bad preparatory schools—that the boys had been taken into subjects they were not ready for, and that even when a boy was only beginning to learn Greek he had nevertheless been reading Thucydides. The same thing applied in every direction. The importance of a proper system of secondary education consisted, not merely in the fact that there was a large body of children who were not properly taught, but the education even of those who were properly educated was being damaged under the present system. Therefore he had thought it his duty to press this matter on the House and the Government.

*THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I shall not have the audacity to add much to the masterly exposition of the most capable educational expert to whom your Lordships have just listened. I wish, however, to be allowed to express my conviction that what he said was both masterly and true. It has been well said that our system of education cannot bear comparison in one or two respects with the education on the Continent. Anyone who has read Dr. Döllinger's recent volume of Essays must have been struck by the comparison which he draws between part of our education and part of the German education. I believe that the secret of our backwardness in some respects is to be found in the way in which we treat the education of boys at a particular age. Between 12 and 16 years of age is the most important period in the education of a youth. If a boy is to have a good secondary education, and to be fitted by it for his work in life, he ought to leave the elementary school at the age of 12 and go to a good secondary school. Unfortunately, there are not enough secondary schools. We have a certain number of very good schools of that class in Westminster, in Manchester, Yorkshire, and Wales, and no doubt Legislation will produce still more. But in this matter of secondary education we are still "running about with the shell on our heads." For what happens to boys of 12 and over? They cannot be sent to secondary schools, and so they remain in elementary schools until they are 15 years of age, or even more. Additional subjects must be taught them if they are to maintain any interest in their studies. The masters know this, and, therefore, a long list of subjects is provided in order to make sure that some in the list shall be sufficiently new for the boys to take an interest in them. The teachings of these subjects cannot, however, be efficient, and when the boys who have taken up two or three of them are sent to a secondary school, it is found that they cannot make up for the time which has been lost. Therefore, I am glad that attention has been drawn to the insufficient number of secondary schools. With encouragement a great many secondary schools would, I believe, spring up, and would be self-supporting, that is, if their fees were not forthwith cut down. But, as an interim measure, one of the best things we could do would be to provide exhibitions in order to assist clever and forward boys to go to such secondary schools as we have. However, we shall all be wiser in regard to this subject when the Report of the Royal Commission is published. I am only anxious that time should not be lost, and that something should be done to prevent a waste of intellectual material among our boys at a very critical age. The frequent changes in the Code are found to be very harassing all over the country. The change in regard to History, I believe, will be a good change, but the insisting upon the changes being effected at a given moment will cause very great hardship to those whom the Bishop of London has spoken. The National Society, the publishers and authors, will find themselves with their shelves loaded with an enormous number of books which will be of no further use. I hope, therefore, that it may be possible to give due notice. It would be well, perhaps, to let the Code come out biennially, and if that change should be successful it might afterwards be presented triennially. I recognise the immense benefit which the new Code will confer upon schools by the regulation that boys and girls who have passed the Oxford and Cambridge examinations may be appointed assistant teachers for a year and afterwards teachers in small schools. That change will make a great difference in the staffs of our schools. In spite of what has already been done, a cry is heard on all sides for good teachers, and it is wise to provide in the way proposed for the addition of a large body of assistant teachers for our small schools. It will be a good thing to introduce into the schools this new social class, who, in their turn, will be benefited by being given a useful and happy occupation.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, that the material upon which those responsible for the Code had to operate was very youthful, and ought, therefore, to be treated with great care. If they tried to cram every kind of knowledge into the little brains of children between infancy and the ages of 12 and 14 they would probably do the children an injury for life. It was not wise to distract their attention wholly for social practical matters. As a former Vice President of the Council, he wished to express his sympathy with the present talented Vice President. In the last two years it had been his fate to speak more than once in opposition to the action of the Vice President, but it was impossible not to thank him cordially for much that the present Code contained. The grouping of small schools was a specially wise change, and he believed that it would be a boon to teachers. The change respecting assistant teachers was also very satisfactory. Another matter for which the Vice President deserved thanks was the proposed increase in teachers' pensions. This would put an end to a great hardship. He was glad that the Vice President impressed upon teachers the advisability of moral training for the children and of discipline. It was generally agreed that inspectors ought to impress this most carefully upon masters and mistresses. The use of biographical teaching he had himself advocated many years ago. It was almost a scandal that our children learnt so little in school about the history of their country, and the historical knowledge which they needed could probably be best imparted through biographies. Abroad, children knew much more of their national history before they finished their elementary curriculum than English children did. He agreed with much that had been said by the Bishop of London as to the importance of not overloading the elementary subjects. Before the Royal Commission that sat in 1888, it was stated that children often forget subsequently all that they had learned at school. They ought to make sure that children should, at all events, not lose the power of good writing, good reading, and good arithmetic. If their attention was distracted to too great an extent with fancy subjects there was a danger of these fundamental requirements being neglected. He remembered Mr. Bright, in the other House, appealing to the educational authorities never to overlook those three important subjects. He rather doubted the advisability of substituting inspectors' visits without notice for the formal visits on examination days. Surprise visits were, no doubt, useful, but if examination days

were done away with completely the standard of learning might be interfered with and an enormous power would be put into the hands of fanciful inspectors. The matter which really pressed upon all schools and school managers was the constant feeling of uncertainty as to changes in regard to buildings and in respect of the Code. He had often wondered whether they could not do with a triennial Code, but he knew this was a very difficult thing to manage. He thought, however, that all who were interested in education ought to consider well whether it was absolutely necessary to make annual changes in the Code. In regard to buildings, while admitting that some changes were necessary, he thought that those changes should have been spread over several years. He heard, too, of requirements being made on the top of other requirements, and this tended to create a feeling of uncertainty and a belief that the rules properly applicable to new school buildings would actually permeate through the older schools. He thought that the Education Department should pledge themselves to a negative by saying that these changes should not be required in the case of schools already existing. It especially behoved those who were interested in poor country schools to see that the requirements of the Department were not very excessive. In regard to the all-important subject of secondary education, he joined with the right rev. Prelates in rejoicing that they would soon have a Report from the Royal Commission, and he looked forward with pleasure to the results of that Commission. If they could separate secondary from primary education they would do more to improve the former than the latter. He felt that primary education was suffering from trying to do too many things, and by requiring from the primary teachers a vast number of subjects. In conclusion, he thanked the Vice President for the present Code, which, he thought, would be of advantage to most of those schools in the country which were labouring under serious disadvantages.

LORD PLAYFAIR: I will first deal with the point raised as to building grants. The requirement of 10 feet square per child is not new in this Code; it has appeared in the Code for a year or two past. It only applies, however, to new schools. In regard to ventilating shafts, it is not intended that the present requirements should apply to old schools, or even to schools now being built if they have considerably advanced towards completion on the old plans. These requirements are only, or chiefly, intended to apply to quite new schools. I am grateful to all the noble Lords who have spoken for the kind way in which they have received the Code on this occasion. They have said very little in censure, and much in praise, of it. There appears, however, to be a general feeling that the changes have been too rapidly made. My noble Friend opposite, who was the author of the first Code, said that it was only 14 pages in length, while the present Code covered 80 pages; but surely he, having given birth to a little one, would not have it remain for ever in a state of infancy, but would wish it to grow as the state of education and the requirements of the country grow. I would point out that from 1886 to 1890 there were no changes in the Code. There is good reason for that. The Royal Commission on Education was sitting, and the Commissioners were contemplating serious changes in education. The Council Office in those circumstances held its hand until they ascertained what the Royal Commission would recommend. In 1890 the Conservative Government were in power, and as soon as the Report of the Royal Commission was published they began to see how they could adapt the Code to the requirements of the Commission. In 1890, therefore, considerable changes were made in the Code, and since then changes had year by year taken place in order to meet new conditions. In many cases, however, the changes were only in administration, and were not connected with the actual duties of the school managers. Your Lordships have now been pleased to commend most of the changes made except the history schedule, though even in this you admit that the changes are for the better, though they have doubtless produced some inconveniences. The exempting Standard V. is that which exempts men from attendance in school; but a lad who got total exemption from history knew nothing of the history of recent times; and the whole object of this schedule is to enable boys who go out to their work in life to know something of history down to the present day, and not to be limited to history down to the times of the Tudors. Some noble Lords have said that this is hard on schools which have a supply of books on hand, and upon the National Society, which will have to buy new books, and upon publishers who have a stock of the old books on hand. There is no such obligation if the matter is read with other parts of the Code, and any school committee sending in a request to be allowed to educate in history upon the old Code until its stock of books be exhausted would receive that permission at once. Lest, however, there should be any confusion on the point, I have to-day laid upon the Table a Minute from the Education Department, which will make the old history alternative with the new history, so that school managers will be able to adopt the new history if they like, or they will go on with the old history until their present stock of books is exhausted, or until they can afford to buy the new ones and have the more rational history taught. I will now say a few words in answer to the right rev. Prelate's objections to the definition conveyed by the words "habitually present." It is a very difficult matter to frame a thoroughly satisfactory definition. I made an attempt at it last year, and I made a mess of it. The purpose of the Department has been to frame a more elastic definition than that implied by "average attendance," which was a statistical number, derived from the attendance for the whole year. In summer time a school may not have half its attendance, while in winter it may be overcrowded, and the expression "habitually present" is intended to meet cases of that kind. The Vice President has, however, promised to give attention to this definition, and as soon as he has time, which will be very soon, he will consider the subject and see whether he can make the definition more intelligible. I now come to the question of specific subjects. The Bishop of London said he disliked these specific subjects because they constituted an attempt to teach everybody everything. I would say that the object of these specific subjects is to teach everybody something. Their object was to give some food which the three R's, or the spoon and knife of education, which enabled a boy to take in—in other words, that boys should know what were the purposes of their elementary knowledge and should improve that knowledge in after life. ["Hear, hear!"] I would here point out, in answer to objections as to the number of the specific subjects mentioned in the Code, that no one is allowed to take more than two. A schoolmaster who might be able to teach well a couple of those subjects might select any two and teach those. But the right rev. Prelates have a great fear that we are using the elementary schools for purposes of secondary education—[*Opposition Cheers*]—but the moment you have a well-organized system of schools for the upper classes, and a system of main schools for the other and poorer classes, it would be unnecessary to teach many of these subjects in the elementary schools. You have not, however, got them now. What made us, in Scotland, so far in advance of the education in England? It was because we had these subjects, from the time of John Knox onwards, taught in our elementary schools. That is why such an active part was taken in insisting that the scholars of the elementary schools should learn mathematics, Latin, French, and other subjects. It was found of infinite value to give the poor parochial children a taste to induce them to go to the popular Universities. The General Assembly for a great many years had sent circulars to the Presbyteries entreating them to hold inquests and find out boys of what is called "pregnant parts," and, when they find such a boy, to ascertain what he has learnt of the higher subjects in the school, and to make a subscription in the church to send him to the University. It is that which made the Universities of the people, and that is what we are now doing until we have secondary schools. Until we get a system of secondary education—until we get a good system of colleges throughout the country, it is wise, if possible, to give the scholars in the elementary schools a taste for learning some of these subjects. The necessities of the time have obliged this country to establish technical schools all over the country, and when the boys have learnt some of these subjects they can go on into their own little colleges, polytechnics, or technical schools, and make themselves more proficient. If we were in the position of Switzerland, and could establish improvement schools everywhere, and could by law compel the children to go to them at evening time to pursue their education, then these specific subjects would cease to be part of the Code. But until you get something of that kind do not discount the specific subjects in your education. They are of value as giving an idea to the children that their education should not end with the elementary school, that they go on, and, having a taste for certain special subjects, should improve themselves, and, at the same time, add to the intelligence of the country. For it is only by the increase of intelligence and technical knowledge that this country can hope to compete with other countries in the future. I think I have now answered most of the points to which my attention has been drawn, and I can only again express satisfaction that the Code this year has received so favourable a reception from all parts of the public in all parts of the kingdom.

*EARL STANHOPE said, the noble Lord had not referred to the matter of the surprise visits. The experiment might be a valuable one, but, at the same time, he hoped that the annual inspection would not be discontinued.

LORD PLAYFAIR: I can say nothing about that until we have more experience. It is true that we have a little experience on the point in connection with the infant schools, in regard to which the set day of visit has been changed to an occasional visit, practically an annual visit, of the inspector at a time not specified. In this case the system has worked well. I have no authority to say anything more, except that this surprise visit, as it is termed, has been introduced after the experience of the infant schools and in the hope that it will work equally good results in the other schools.

## PETITION.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY presented a petition from the Liverpool School Board praying that—

"the law may be amended so as to secure that all efficient public elementary schools, whether voluntary or Board, shall share equitably in all public monies raised, whether by taxes or rates, for the purposes of public elementary education."

His Lordship said, in presenting the Petition, that he wished it to be clearly understood that he expressed no opinion of his own upon it.

The House adjourned at Twenty-five Minutes after Six of the Clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, 29th March 1895.*

The House met at a Quarter after Two of the clock.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### KEW GARDENS

MR. A. BILLSON (Devon, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, whether the guide to Kew Gardens has been out of print for eight years, and whether a new edition was almost ready three years ago; whether another summer is to be allowed to pass without its publication; and how soon a guide to Museum 2 is to be issued.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, LEEDS, W.): The general guide-book to Kew Gardens has been for some years out of print. Owing to the extensive development of the collections, and to their re-organization, a mere revision of the old guide would be worthless and misleading. Each department is being worked up and catalogued in detail, and rapid progress is being made in this work, which must be accomplished before the new edition of the popular guide can be issued. Every effort is being made to hasten the publication; but I must remind my hon. Friend that the resources of the Kew establishment are being strained to the uttermost by the growing demands of the Government Departments, India, and the Colonies. In the meantime an enlarged key-plan appears to satisfy the requirements of the bulk of visitors. The guide to Museum 2 is ready, and will be published as soon as the index is finished.

### SNAILBEACH MINE ACCIDENT.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the late lamentable accident at the Snailbeach lead-mine in Shropshire, in which a number of miners lost their lives, owing to the breaking of an unsound rope which had been in use for nine years; whether he is aware that the Government Inspector at the inquest expressed his dissatisfaction at the way in which the rope was looked after; whether it has been ascertained, who, if anyone, was responsible for the supervision of the rope; and whether any further proceedings will be taken; if he will inquire whether a system prevails in this mine compelling the miners to buy from the owners, at a price alleged to be excessive, gunpowder, fuses, and candles; and, whether this system is in accordance with the provisions of the Truck Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I have received a report from the inspector, who says that the rope had been in use eight-and-a-half years, which he considers too long a period, and that some specified person ought to have been deputed to grease it; that the outward appearance of the rope did not betray its inner corrosion; and that in his opinion no contravention of the Acts of Parliament had been committed. The question whether the law in this respect requires amendment will be considered by the inspectors at their next meeting. Under the Truck Acts, it is allowable for the miners to contract to buy their materials, such as gunpowder, from the employers, and to pay even an unreasonable price for them. The Bill introduced by me is aimed at the kind of evil complained of by the hon. Member, for it does not permit any but reasonable prices to be paid or deducted from wages. If the hon. Member will supply me with any details of the acts complained of they shall be investigated.

### SCOTCH HERRING FISHERY.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, if it is in accordance with Law to use a scringe net for the catching of herrings in inlets and lochs in Scotland; and, if not, whose duty is it to prevent such a mode of fishing, which is stated to be very destructive of fish?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan and Kinross): It is lawful to use a scringe net for the catching of herrings in small inlets and lochs in Scotland. That mode of fishing might, I believe, be prohibited by the Fishery Board, if they considered it expedient to do so.

### THE KINGCASE RIFLE RANGE, AYRSHIRE.

Mr. E. WASON (Ayrshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that objections have been lodged against the bye-laws submitted by him to the President of the Board of Trade in connection with the Volunteer shooting range at Kingcase, Prestwick, Ayrshire, whereby it is proposed to shut up a portion of the seashore between Ayr and Prestwick three days a week during the summer months by the Ayr Town Council, the Ayr Harbour Trustees, the Freemen and Community of Newton and also of Prestwick, the superiors of the land on which the ranges are situated and of the adjoining lands, the adjoining proprietors and others interested, and the proprietors and tenants of lands and houses in Prestwick, New Prestwick, Kingcase, and Prestwick-road, Newton; and whether it is his intention to continue the application for bye-laws against the wish of the public bodies and the other parties whose interests are interefered with?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): The objections to the proposed bye-laws have been received, and are under consideration.

### THE SCHOOL BOARD RATE.

Mr. A. GROVE (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in view of the unequal incidence of the School Board Rate, and of the hardship inflicted upon localities where large numbers of the working classes are collected, and the assessable value is in consequence low, he can introduce a Bill to remedy this inequality, or appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the question?

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): I fully recognise the great hardships caused to certain school districts by the pressure of the School Board Rate, where the industrial population is large and the rateable value low. The question is one of considerable difficulty. I am afraid immediate legislation is not possible, but I have directed that inquiry shall be made in the department into the facts as they affect various localities, so that they may be carefully tabulated. As the question is only part of a very much larger question, the Government do not find it possible to appoint a Select Committee on it at present.

In further reply to Mr. Grove,

Mr. ACLAND said he would consider the question of appointing a Select Committee to inquire into the matter.

### CARRICK-ON-SUIR UNION.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the scrutiny of votes for the Rathgormach electoral division of the Carrick-on-Suir union shows that Mr. Maurice Kennedy obtained 80 votes, while Mr. Michael Power obtained only 51; that the returning officer has declared Mr. Michael Power duly elected, on the ground that the writing of the signature of the nominator of Mr. Maurice Kennedy in the nomination paper does not precisely resemble his writing of his signature in his voting paper; and that the nominator of Mr. Kennedy has made a statutory declaration and forwarded it to the Local Government Board to the effect that his signature to the nomination paper is in his own handwriting; and whether the Local Government Board will, under the circumstances, direct the returning officer to amend his return by declaring Mr. Maurice Kennedy duly elected?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: The Local Government Board received yesterday a complaint regarding the action of the returning officer in this matter, together with the statutory declaration referred to. The papers will be forwarded to the returning officer for his observations before further action is taken. I may add that the Board have no power to direct a returning officer to amend his return of a poor law election, but the Board, if satisfied that the person returned by him has no right to act as a Guardian, can set aside the return and order a fresh election to take place.

MR. POWER, may I ask if he is entitled to vote in the meantime as an elected member of the Board.

MR. J. MORLEY: That is a legal point that I cannot answer, but I will inquire.

MR. POWER: May I ask the Chief Secretary if he will inquire immediately, as a division is expected to-morrow of great importance.

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot get a legal opinion by to-morrow.

MR. T. J. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether two of the Justices, included by the Clerk of the Union of Carrick-on-Suir in the list of ex-officio guardians for the union, namely, Messrs. Edward Bowers and George W. Withers, who are non-resident, are entitled to act, in view of the fact that there are other non-resident Justices, namely, Viscount Clifden, who is a Justice of the county of Kilkenny, and Mr. Goodman, who is a Justice of the county of Kerry, who both possess a higher rating qualification in the Carrick-on-Suir Union than Messrs. Bowers and Withers; whether, under Section 7 of the 12th & 13th Vic., c. 104, as defined by the circular letter of the Local Government Board in reference thereto, the Clerk of the Union was bound to include Viscount Clifden and Mr. Goodman in the list of ex-officio guardians on the 29th September last, they having been on that date acting Justices for the counties in which they reside; and whether the Local Government Board will at once direct the amendment of the list of ex-officio guardians by striking off the names of those who have been acting as guardians up to the present?

MR. J. MORLEY: A complaint was only received by the Local Government Board on the 27th instant, in reference to the action of the Returning Officer in the preparation of the list referred to, and the Board are now in communication with that officer on the subject.

## THE REFORMATORY SHIP "CLARENCE."

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the reformatory ship *Clarence*, on the River Mersey, is supported almost entirely from taxes and rates, and that the committee of management includes no representatives of the taxpayers or ratepayers; whether he is aware that, although after careful consideration of the report of the recent official inquiry he has recommended the reinstatement of the captain, and that the responsibility for the recent smallpox scandals rested with the medical officer, the committee of management have now decided that the captain is not to be reinstated but is to leave the ship on 5th April, while the services of the medical officer are retained; whether the committee will be called upon to reconsider their decision; and what further action he proposes to take in vindication of the conclusions of the official inquiry?

MR. ASQUITH: The ship may be said to be entirely supported by the rates and taxes, as last year the contributions from these sources amounted to £4,400 19s., and the private subscriptions to £6. The committee may, therefore, in a sense, be said to represent the rate and tax payers. The facts are as suggested in the question. A letter has been written to the committee of management stating that:—

> "The Secretary of State must insist on the reinstatement of Captain Statham in command of the *Clarence*, and unless he hears that the committee are prepared to adopt this course it will be his duty to take steps for the withdrawal of the certificate which they now hold."

## THE FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS BILL.

MR. W. WHITELAW (Perth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, after the Second Reading of the Factories and Workshops Bill, he intends to move to refer it to a Standing Committee; and, if so, to which Standing Committee?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes; to the Standing Committee on Trade.

## NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS ACT.

Sir A. K. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps the Board have taken, or intend to take, in order to inform themselves as to when it may be desirable or not to appoint a medical assessor in the terms of Section 3, Sub-section 1, of the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen): The Accident Returns are examined, and in cases of sufficient importance the Board of Trade appoint a competent person to hold an investigation. No inquiry has yet been held in which the appointment of a medical assessor has been found to be necessary, but each case will be considered on its merits.

## SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.

Mr. R. S. DONKIN (Tynemouth): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in the event of a candidate seeking election on a school board, and having children who are paid officials of that board, and such children canvassing on their parents' behalf, he would be disqualified?

Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND: If the hon. Gentleman refers, as I assume, to Section 34 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870, the Department have no power to decide any question which arises under that section. The section places the decision under the jurisdiction of the courts of law.

## SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

*Mr. J. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland what is the last available day for moving an Address relating to the Scotch Education Code; and whether, having regard to the importance of the changes made in the New Code regarding training of teachers, the arrangements for Queen's students, and the great inconvenience attending such discussions after midnight, the Government will provide for the discussion coming on at a reasonable hour?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Sir George Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The period of one month during which the Code must, as prescribed by Section 67 of the Act of 1872, lie before Parliament expires on Thursday the 4th of April. Any question with regard to the business of the House had better be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but I cannot think that it will be possible to bring on the discussion at an earlier hour than usual.

## RETALIATORY TARIFFS.

Mr. J. K. WINGFIELD-DIGBY (Dorset, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of the unequal competition to which the British and Irish farmers are subject through the importation of large quantities of bounty-assisted cheese and butter, he will try and induce the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider the propriety of neutralising these bounty systems by imposing Import Duties on such goods equivalent to the amount of the bounty?

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Herbert Gardner, Essex, Saffron): No Sir, with the experience of other countries before our eyes, I cannot undertake to propose to my right hon. Friend that we should embark upon a policy of retaliatory tariffs. I may perhaps add, that the interesting report by Sir Joseph Crowe on the Agriculture, Bounties, and General Trade, of France, which was delivered this morning, is an instructive Commentary on the cost and results of a protective system, and I hope that it may receive consideration at the hands of those agriculturists who look for assistance in the direction indicated by the hon. Member.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that a duty designed to countervail bounties is in the nature of a protective duty?

*Mr. HERBERT GARDNER: I imagine that it is generally understood to be so.

## SCOTCH LIGHTHOUSES.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of the Trade if he can state whether the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses are taking any steps to obtain the statutory sanction of Trintity House for the erection of a lighthouse on Tiumpan Head, so that this much-needed work may be included in next year's Estimates.

Mr. BRYCE : No Sir, I cannot. Proposals for new lighthhouses in Scotland do not come before me until the Trinity House have considered and decided on applications made by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses. I refer the hon. Member to my reply to him on the 19th instant.

Mr. J. G. WEIR : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the lighthouse authorities have arrived at a decision since the 21st February last as to what works will be commenced this year, and whether, seeing that the proposed lighthouse on Flannen Islands was approved several years since, and that in consequence of the dangerous character of the coast in that part workmen can only be employed for a short time during the summer, steps will be taken to start operations as soon as the fine weather sets in ?

Mr. BRYCE said : The Estimates of the three General Lighthouse Authorities are still under my consideration. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on the 21st of last month, as to the impossibility of undertaking this year all the new works which have in principle been approved. I then told him that the proposed Lighthouse on the Flannen Islands was one of those approved in principle.

## THE RAILWAY AT ERBUSAIG.

Mr. J. G. WEIR : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received a petition from the inhabitants of Erbusaig, Lochalsh, Ross-shire, to the effect that, in the interests of the fishing and crofting population, there should be at least three openings in the embankment of the new railway in that district ; and whether steps have been taken to prevent the construction of the embankment without the necessary openings to the seashore ?

Mr. BRYCE : I have received from the Secretary for Scotland the petition referred to by the hon. Member, and will carefully consider the representations of the petitioners whenever the working drawings of the railway embankment are submitted to me by the Highland Railway Company, which has not yet been done.

## TYPE-WRITING MACHINES FOR MEMBERS.

Mr. KILBRIDE (on behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, Mr. P. A. M'Hugh) : I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has yet completed arrangements for the accommodation of Members desiring to use type-writing machines within the precincts of this House ?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE : The number of hon. Members who themselves use type-writing machines is very small, and I am afraid I cannot set apart any room for their special use. But I have now made arrangements by which a staff of clerks, with the requisite number of machines, will be at the service of hon. Members, and prepared to take work at a price which has been agreed upon. The room to be used specially for this purpose will be the smaller of the rooms formerly occupied by the Railway Commissioners, access to which is obtained on the south side of St. Stephen's Hall. Work will be begun on Wednesday next.

## INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have submitted proposals tending to ameliorate the conditions of service, furlough, &c., of European officials, of the Indian police and other branches of the Civil (Uncovenanted) Service of India ; and, if so, whether any decision has been come to thereon ; and, if not, whether a speedy one may be expected ?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, replying in the absence of Mr. H. H. Fowler, said : The Government of India have submitted proposals respecting the leave rules of the various Civil Departments in India. These are now under the consideration of the Secretary of State, but before a final decision can be passed on all points, a further reference to the Government of India will probably be necessary.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### REPORT OF SUPPLY.

On the Report of £4,439,268 for the Vote on Account,

**Mr. R. W. HANBURY** (Preston) called attention to the very heavy contributions for military purposes which had been imposed on the Straits Settlements, with the result that all the unofficial Members of the Legislative Council had resigned, and the official Members of the Council had to pass the Vote, although they had expressed a strong opinion against the justice of the claim. As to the mode of levying military contributions for military purposes on the various Colonies, he said that those Colonies might be roughly divided into four classes. In the first place there were the self-governing Colonies—colonies which had a Constitutional Government of their own and which were practically, so far as administering their own affairs were concerned, independent states. With regard to them the rule was for them to supply their own local defences, but in the case where there were Imperial coaling stations situated within the limits of the Colonies they contributed nothing whatever annually to the cost of the Imperial stations. In one or two instances he believed that they had contributed a portion of the expense of building fortifications, but beyond that they did nothing whatever. Then there was the second class of what might be called semi-self governing Colonies. They had absolute control of their own expenditure, and, while they did little towards supplying the needs of their own local defences, they also availed themselves of the control of their own finances to refuse to pay anything towards an Imperial contribution to keep up the coaling station or the Imperial garrison. In the next place there were such Colonies as Gibraltar which contributed nothing either to local or Imperial defence; and, therefore, with regard to the third class of Colonies there was this fact to be noted, that in no case whatever did they contribute any annual sum towards the maintenance of Imperial garrisons within their confines. But a certain class of Crown Colonies were in a different position altogether. They not only had to maintain their own local defences, but they had to pay the expenses, in some cases the whole, in other cases a very large portion, of the Imperial garrison. The Colonies under this head were Hong Kong, Mauritius, Ceylon, and the Straits. In all those cases contributions for Imperial military purposes were very heavy indeed. But there was no Colony in this class so hardly treated as the Colony of the Straits Settlements. Ceylon, with 1,650 troops, paid £80,000 a year; Hong Kong, with 3,000 troops, £40,000 a year; Mauritius, with 1,000 troops, £18,000 a year; and the Straits Settlements, with 1,500 troops, £100,000 a year, with the possibility of this amount being increased to £150,000 a year within four years, and it had also to pay largely towards the expenses of building barracks. Let the House compare the Crown Colonies with some of the other Colonies. The West African Colonies, with 1,200 troops, and the West Indian Colonies, with 4,500 troops, contributed nothing towards Imperial expenditure. The case was made worse by the fact that this heavy expenditure was solely upon the defence of an Imperial station which practically was of no value whatever to the local defences. The fortifications at Singapore were concentrated entirely on the local depôt at the New Harbour, and there was no defence at Penang or Malacca. What was the justification for the unusual charge? He was unable to trace any justification for so heavy and exceptional a charge. In 1866 Singapore, Penang, and Malacca were taken over from India, he believed at their own request. The reason of that step was to avoid the very heavy general Indian charges which they had to pay—charges amounting to nearly 25 per cent. of their then small revenue. The charges now imposed upon them came to 25 per cent. of the increased revenue which the exigencies and the trade of the times had enabled them to raise. It was, however, distinctly understood at the time that the Straits Settlements were to bear only the cost of their local defence. Singapore was not an important Imperial station at this time; and what they were to pay for these local defences was put at a maximum of £50,000 a year. The conditions of transfer were clear on that point:—

> "The payment of the Colony for military defence shall be £50,000 if the cost of the troops stationed there shall amount to or exceed that sum."

That was to say, in no case were these expenses to exceed £50,000, and if the actual cost of the troops there did not amount to that sum the colony was not to pay so much; £50,000 was to be the maximum. Although these were the terms of the transfer, the Government from that day to this had steadily maintained the opinion that the Imperial Government itself was not to incur any extra expenditure on account of the transfer, and they based that argument, not on any agreement made between the Home Government or the Indian Government and these Settlements, but simply on some correspondence which passed between the War Office and the Colonial Office. On the 28th of March, 1866, the terms of transfer were further confirmed by a letter from the War Office in a despatch to the Colonial Office. On the 25th of May, 1866, the Treasury wrote to the Colonial Office, stating that Mr. Cardwell, who was then Secretary of State for War—

> "does not consider that the Settlements can be called upon to incur any charge that may be required for troops stationed at Singapore for for Imperial purposes."

That showed that the sum of £50,000 was to be devoted entirely to local defences. No doubt a change occurred owing to the opening of the Suez Canal, in consequence of which Singapore became a very important port of call for ships which had originally gone round by the Cape. The importance of Cape Town was transferred to Singapore, which became the great emporium of the eastern trade. Although the Colony might have stood by the terms of the Agreement of 1866, it fell in with a Revised Agreement, so anxious was it to do everything fair in the matter. It agreed that, up to 1890, whatever the cost of the Imperial troops stationed at Singapore was—whether it amounted to less than £50,000 or not—it would pay £50,000 by way of military contribution. But, at the same time, the Imperial Government asked the Colony to contribute to certain Imperial works and armaments which were being constructed in the Straits Settlements at that time, and it distinctly refused to contribute a penny to them on the ground that they were Imperial works and not local defences at all. That took place about 1871 or 1872. Time went on, trade increased, and the Colony undoubtedly was further benefited by the increased trade of England to the East. In 1881, the Royal Commission which sat, under the presidency of Lord Carnarvon, to inquire into the general question of coaling stations, arrived at the conclusion that Singapore would form a very important military and coaling station for Imperial purposes. That being so, Singapore was chosen as an Imperial coaling station, and the Straits Settlements agreed, in consideration of defences being constructed there, to contribute £81,000 towards the cost of the actual fortifications. But it was distinctly understood at the time between the Straits Settlements and the Home Government that, if they contributed the £81,000 towards fortifications the ordinary contribution was to go on exactly as before. That went on till the year 1890, and then it was maintained on the part of the Home Government that not only the temporary arrangement of 1882, but also the agreement under which the Settlements were transferred from the Indian Government to the Home Government came to an end. They at once proceeded to lay an enormous charge—double the previous amount of the military contribution—upon the Settlements. In 1889 the Home Government suddenly informed the Government of the Straits Settlements that instead of a military contribution of £50,000 a year they would for the next four years have to find no less a sum than £100,000 in addition to the actual cost they had incurred in connection with the fortifications. When the announcement was made there was naturally a very strong feeling of resentment in the Colony; not only the unofficial members protested, but actually the Governor of the Colony himself wrote home showing the injustice done to the Colony. The Government at home were relentless: they said the £100,000 a year must be levied, and the official members of the Legislative Council voted the money in spite of their own private convictions. In

1890–91–92, and he thought in 1893, the £100,000 was voted in the same way, simply by the official members of the Council. Owing to certain circumstances the burden was enormously increased. In the first place there was a heavy fall in exchange, which in itself would very largely add to the expenses. Then, again, there was the fact that in previous years, in order to meet the heavy extra expenditure, all the surplus which the Colony had accumulated during years of fairly good trade, and when the military contribution was small, had been exhausted by the extra military contribution. In 1893 the Colony was stranded with no reserve whatever, and they had to pay the heavy contribution out of their annual receipts. They had to cut down their expenditure. Education was largely checked, and even public works were altogether stopped. Fresh taxes were imposed on the Colony, and the result was that while in 1889 the revenue of the Colony had been 4½ millions of dollars, in 1894 it had fallen to something like 3½ million dollars. In 1891, so serious had the circumstances of the Colony become, that the then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) distinctly promised in the House of Commons that if things went on, and if the Revenue of the Colony was reduced and this heavy military contribution had to be still levied, the Government at home would seriously consider the matter, and see whether some reduction might take place. Lord Ripon had since then been approached, he did not remember whether by the Government or by the unofficial representatives of the Colony, and the result was that his Lordship had promised to make certain concessions. He understood that instead of the sum of £100,000 annually they were to be required to pay £80,000 for 1894, and £90,000 for 1895. That at first sight might seem to be a concession, but practically it was no concession at all. Certainly it was not a carrying out of the promise made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1891. In 1891, at the rate of exchange, £100,000 meant 650,000 dollars, whereas at the present rate of exchange £90,000 meant 900,000 dollars. Therefore, the actual payment of the Colony was a great deal larger and heavier now than it was in 1891. But the case did not rest there. This was only a temporary concession, and it was only on the system of deferred payment. Although in those two years £30,000 less would be paid by the colony than would have been the case if the contribution of £100,000 had gone on, Lord Ripon was not going to retard the concession beyond 1894 and 1895, and the great contention of the Home Office that this colony, unlike all other colonies, was liable to be called up to pay the total cost of this military expenditure. In fact there was no concession whatever; there was only a system of deferred payment. He thought this a mere shuffling of the question. It was most unfair to the Straits Settlements, because it was utterly impossible for the colony to put its finances on a sound foundation or to know the scale on which they should buy taxes if they were always to be in a state of uncertainty as to the military contribution the Home Government was going to force upon them every year. The colony offered to contribute £70,000 a year, which, taking into account the rate of exchange, represented a much larger value in dollars. That, he thought, was a very fair offer indeed, considering all the circumstances. It should be remembered that the complaint of the Straits Settlement was not only that this heavy charge which they were unable to bear—for they had had a deficit in three years—was put upon them; but that it was almost exactly the same amount as they had to pay to India before they were transferred to the Home Government. In 1866, the colony got transferred from the Indian Government to the Imperial Government for the purpose of avoiding those heavy general charges. There had, however, been no improvement in that respect. In fact, the Straits Settlements were now actually loaded with far heavier charges under the Home Government than they ever had to meet under the Indian Government. But he ventured to say that in the manner in which those heavy charges were forced upon them by the great grievance of the Straits Settlements against the Imperial Government. The colony had a charter which enabled them to control their own finances for the purposes of the colony. It also had a Legislative Council, but it seemed to be a mere sham, because undoubtedly this contribution had been forced upon the Legislative Council in a mode the Imperial Government dare not have resorted to, if the Legislative Council had been a true representative body. Everybody in the colony in a truly representative capacity had protested against this charge. The unofficial members of the Legislative Council had carried their protest to the extent of throwing up their positions on the Council. The official members of the Council could not have gone so far as that, but they also had protested, through the voice of the Governor, against this charge. What was the use of a Legislative Council of that kind? It was no protection whatever to the colony. Such a state of things would not be tolerated in any self-governing or even semi-self-governing colony. He thought that on all those grounds the Straits Settlements had got a fair grievance against the Home Government. He believed the Colonial Office was inclined to take a fair view of the case; but they had to fight against the War Office and the Treasury, and their chances of overcoming those departments were small indeed. But, nevertheless, he hoped the Under Secretary for the Colonies would be able to announce that some concession had been made in the exorbitant demand of the Imperial Government on the Straits Settlement.

*Sir C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, it was evident the hon. Member for Preston had given very deep attention to this particular matter of the contribution made by the Straits Settlements towards Imperial Defence; but he was wrong in his statement that self-governing colonies did not contribute towards the expenses of Imperial garrisons and the coaling stations of the Empire. He was also surprised to find the hon. Gentleman instituting a comparison in this matter between a rich trading colony like the Straits Settlements and the miserable West African Colonies such as the Crown Colony of Sierra Leone. The port at Sierra Leone had been fortified simply for the protection of Imperial trade in time of war. Sierra Leone did not derive any trade benefit in time of peace from the port, while the immense trade of Singapore rendered its fortifications necessary for its protection. The hon. Member for Preston seemed to think that the dominant factor in the transfer of the Straits Settlement from India to the Home Government was the desire that the Straits Settlement should escape its payment towards the defence of the Empire as part of India. That might have been the intention of the colony, but it certainly was not the intention of the Home Government when they consented to the change. But it was hardly worthy of the rich merchants of a place like Singapore to desire to pay less than was paid by the much poorer population of India towards the defence of the Empire. They should at least be willing to contribute something like the sum which they would contribute had they remained part of the Indian Empire. The hon. Member said that the people of Singapore could not pay this money because they had a deficit. That was a relative matter, and depended upon the taxation they raised. The taxation of the Straits Settlements was less than the taxation of India, and if they had a deficit they must meet it as India had to meet it, in the usual way. He was bound to say there was a larger aspect of this question which appealed to himself. In the present state of unrest in the minds of the inhabitants of large parts of India, it seemed to him unwise that they should do anything to give colour to the view that India was overtaxed in connection with imperial defence. No doubt, as the hon. Member had said, the Colonial Office for the sake of peace would be glad, if they could see their way, to diminish the contributions from the colonies. But he did not think the pressure of this House ought to be exercised in that sense. They ought, on the contrary, to encourage all Governments to insist upon the full adoption of the principle that each crown colony—especially where it was wealthy, as he thought this colony was—should pay its full measure towards the services of imperial defence.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) was very glad the right hon. Baronet had called attention to the fact that the question introduced by his hon. Friend was one essential part of a great whole, and he hoped that neither the Government nor the House would ever consider or deal with it as if it were not so. This question really resolved itself into two great divisions, and the case of Singapore was a good case in point, but only in point, because the question they were now dealing with applied to every part of their empire. The two divisions were those of territorial defence and contributions to the defence of their communication. In regard to territorial defence it was essential in the case of a self-governing colony to leave that matter in the hands of the local colonial government, and in their self-governing colonies he believed there were now 80,000 armed and trained men concerned in the defence of these portions of the Empire, for which the Empire contributed nothing whilst their self-governing colonies did in a large and increasing ratio contribute to the defence of imperial connection and communication. But to come back to Singapore. They were dealing with the necessary or right contributions of those colonies which were not self-governing, and for which the Imperial Government still retained the responsibility of defence. He was sorry the right hon. Baronet should have termed their West African settlements miserable.

*Sir C. DILKE: By comparison with Singapore.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL thought when the right hon. Gentleman got hold of the most recent statistics he would find at the present day not only were they of more importance than he imagined, but that they were rapidly increasing in that importance by a ratio of growth quite unprecedented in any other colony. He might say that the West African settlements were now doing a trade of £10,000,000 sterling, which was a far larger trade than was done by all the West Indian Islands or Ceylon, and far larger than the local trade of Singapore. These contributions from crown colonies were matters of the highest importance in the great question of Imperial defence, and when they were dealing with Singapore they were dealing with the ratio which a crown colony ought to bear to that imperial defence, because they had to place Imperial troops in those Colonies for the sake of defending that portion of the territory of the Empire without any regard to Imperial communication. And the advantage that these Colonies not only enjoyed but acknowledged was that a great deal of the expenditure due to the presence of an Imperial Garrison in a Colony was made within the Colony itself and largely promoted its prosperity. He knew that the West Indian Colonies competed with each other for the honour and advantage of obtaining an Imperial Garrison. It was not a one-sided imposition by the imperial authorities to place an imperial garrison in a Colony. He only wished to point out that the case of Singapore was an instance in one great whole, and must be dealt with in that spirit. He would also add that any conditions they imposed must be liable to variation, because all these Colonies were in process of growth and were continually altering not only in their actual position at the moment, but in their position in the near future, and he hoped the Government might have some proposal to make which should bring these considerations into the estimates of what the Colonies ought to pay. He had himself gone carefully into the subject of Singapore, and the general conclusion he had arrived at was that at the present moment perhaps in comparison with other places Singapore paid too much. He should be glad if these Colonial contributions could be arranged on some general scale which would take into consideration the benefits of the defence of the Empire as a whole, which would satisfy the different Colonies that what was done was in their best interest, and show them that the home Government was not levying unfair contributions from them for the purposes of Imperial defence.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) protested against the milk-and-water speeches which they had heard. What were the facts? The contributions levied on Singapore dare not be levied on any Colony enjoying responsible Government. These contributions were levied against the wishes of the Governor appointed by the Colonial Office, against the wishes of the officials there, and of every inhabitant. He appealed to the House to allow some investigation to be made in this matter so that Singapore and Hong Kong might only be charged that which in justice they ought to be called upon to pay. The levy now made on Singapore was so great, that in order to meet it expenditure in directions which would tend to the material improvement of the Colony had to be curtailed. If a Committee were appointed to consider the whole question the people of Singapore and Hong Kong would agree to pay what such Committee decided was their fair contribution, but it was monstrous that they should be called upon to bear a burden which was too heavy for their resources.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, there was only one word he desired to say with reference to the historical part of the hon. Member for Preston's speech, and that was that if the Straits Settlements had remained part of India the military contribution which they would have to pay at the present moment would be probably a far larger proportion as part of the Indian than it was as part of the British Empire. He had to explain to the House that, though officially representing the Colonial Office in regard to this matter, this question was one which affected three Departments—namely, the War Office, the Treasury, and the Colonial Office, and therefore anything he could say was rather restricted, inasmuch as he could not speak the opinion of the three Departments, but only that of one of them. If this question was to be discussed in a broad view it must be discussed as affecting the Colonies as a whole. He did not propose, however, to discuss it from that broad view, as the hon. Member for Preston had dealt with it from the point of view of the Straits Settlement alone. He agreed with the hon. Member that it would be very invidious if there was to be any discussion between the Colonial Office and a Colony as to the fair share which the latter ought to bear of local Imperial charges. It was not likely under present circumstances, and when the sums were fixed that the two parties would ever agree as to what was a fair share to pay. As regarded the Home Government, they had recognised to the full that the circumstances not only of the Straits Settlements, but of other Colonies, had materially changed for the worse during the last few years because of the falling off in trade, and more especially because of the fall in exchange. The same sterling contribution at the present time threw a much heavier charge on the Colonies in silver dollars than was the case a few years ago. As regarded the contribution of the Straits Settlements, the Home Government had endeavoured to do something to alleviate their position. The Government agreed that, instead of the contribution of £100,000 a year, which was exacted from them during the last few years, and which it was intended to renew, it should only be £80,000 for 1894, and also a reduced sum for 1895. The hon. Member had misunderstood the position of the Colony and of the Home Government in regard to future years. If he would refer to the Dispatch written by the Colonial Office, which represented the three Departments, he would see that it had been specifically promised to the Colony that, if their material position altered for the worse during the next three years, that circumstance would be taken into favourable account by the Home Government as regarded the contribution.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Has the Dispatch been published?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON was not sure that it had been actually laid before the House, but it had been published in the papers out there. In the sentence in which Lord Ripon stated the position of the Home Government, he said that—

> "should unexpected circumstances arise, such as a very material fall in silver . . . Her Majesty's Government would not fail to take note of the altered situation, and to consider any representation which the Colony might make with regard to the situation generally."

He thought the hon. Member had forgotten too much that there was another side to this question, and that was the side of the British taxpayer, because, while it was certainly understood, when the Straits Settlements were taken over from India, that they should bear the local costs of their defence, if hon. Members would look at the figures they would see that, assuming the contribution of £100,000 during the current five years, the cost to the Colony would be half-a-million, but to the English taxpayer it would not be less than £275,000. Therefore, the English taxpayer was bearing a very material portion of the local defence of the Straits Settlements. That was a matter which ought to be taken into account in considering the amount of the contribution. He would only say in conclusion that all desired, if possible, and it was to our interest to come to, an amicable arrangement with these Colonies. The friction between the Home Government and the Colonies was a great source of discomfort to the Colonial Office and to the Colonies; and if they could arrive at some conclusion, on some basis fair alike to the Colony and the Home Government, whereby the contribution should form some proportionate part of their material position year by year, it would, he thought, be much better than the arrangement of these fixed sums, over which there were these perpetual wrangles. The Departmental Committee was now sitting, and they had practically already made their Report, and he trusted it would only be a short time before whatever conclusions they arrived at would be put into force, and that they might not on any future occasion have these questions raised in the House, which caused considerable friction between the Colonies and the Home Government. He believed the result of the inquiry would be an arrangement satisfactory to the Home Government and the Eastern Colonies alike.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) asked the Under Secretary for the Colonies for further information as to the actual state of affairs in Swaziland. The House would remember that the Debate which was initiated by the hon. Member for North Ayrshire the other day was brought to an abrupt conclusion by the action of the Government, who pleaded, as an excuse for stopping the Debate, the public interest. He confessed he was not able to recognise at the moment, nor had he been able to understand since, the validity of the plea. In his opinion the plea of public interest should never be used by a Government, except in the most extreme cases, and inasmuch as no information could possibly reach Swaziland except through the Boer telegraphs, and the Boers exercised a strict censorship over all telegrams, the alleged danger of the Swazis being incited to incite the wrath of the Boers by resistance was a chimerical danger. They knew well that, as far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, the Swazis had been abandoned. They had, in his opinion, been betrayed. Our old allies, to whom we were bound, by honour and gratitude, as well as by Treaty, as far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, had been given up to their bitter enemies. What had happened since the Convention of December 1894, by which the Government had entirely abandoned the Swazis? It was agreed by that Convention that Her Majesty's Government should press on the Swazi Queen Regent and the Council to issue the Organic Proclamation. That Organic Proclamation amounted to a formal statement by the Swazis that they had resigned their independence, and accepted the Government and Administration of the Boers. For 15 months, since November 1893, Her Majesty's Government had used every endeavour to get the Swazis to issue that Proclamation. They had steadily refused. The Queen Mother and the Queen Regent both emphatically refused to sign. They said: "We will never sign it." The young King said: "We will never sign the Proclamation." And an old chieftain, one of the envoys who came over here, made an interesting and remarkable statement. He said—

> "We will never sign. We will never accept Boer rule until Her Majesty, the great Queen, our Mother, also puts herself under the Boers, and if the great Queen puts herself under the Boers, then we, the dogs of the great Queen, will follow her, and put ourselves also under the Boers."

That was the answer of the whole Swazi people. Now he would call attention to the action of the Boers. On January 12 President Kruger mobilised his artillery at a place on the north-eastern border. That fact aroused some interest in this country, and a telegram was sent over here to state that the artillery was not mobilised against the Swazis but against the Basutos. On the 13th of February came the final and emphatic refusal of the Swazis to accept Boer domination. Generals Joubert and Schmidt went down to the borders of Swazis and summoned a commando and assembled a little over a thousand rifles. The artillery was brought up and every menace was made for the occupation of Swazi in force. This occurred at the end of February. But the Boers received some alarming information—and, no doubt, their Govment also received the same information privately—to the effect that a very formidable combination of the natives had been organised to assist the Boer attacks. And, in addition, he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman had information that there was a considerable movement among the non-Boer population of the Transvaal who were ready to give practical help to the Swazis in case they were attacked. In consequence of that, the Boers hesitated, and he thought, very wisely hesitated, to go in. Now came a part of the narrative which he did not speak of with confidence, because they had not yet received any written accounts; and no private telegrams were allowed to go over the Boer wires. He understood the hon. Gentleman the other day to state that there was no truth in the report that communications to Her Majesty's Government were under the control of the Boers.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: What I said was, that the communications that were received came from the High Commissioner, who received them direct from our representative in Swaziland, and that, of course, there was no possibility of tampering with them.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he had no doubt that Her Majesty's Government received their communications, especially those in cypher, without being tampered with, but what he understood was that all the public and private telegrams were under the control of the Boers, and he still asserted that. The rest of the story was, he admitted, more or less conjecture, and it was with regard to that he wished for information from the hon. Gentleman. What he believed to have happened was this. The Boers, alarmed by this native combination and the effervescence, if not more, among the non-Boer population in the Transvaal, and also the movement in this country, decided upon a compromise. The hon. Gentleman had informed the House that the Organic Proclamation, which the Government had been urging in every way, fair and unfair, upon this unfortunate people for 11 months no longer existed, and had been abandoned. That admission pointed to a compromise. The hon. Gentleman also told the House that an interview had been arranged between the young Swazi King and the Boer generals. He did not know where the interview took place, but believed it was outside the borders of Swaziland. They were told that, at that interview, General Joubert appointed the young King as Paramount Chief of Swaziland, and that then the young King went back to his country, and matters remained *in statu quo*. The Under Secretary had said it was assumed that the Swazis peacefully accepted the Boer Administration. Why? Because Mr. Crowe, a Boer gentleman, who had been a member of the triumvirate who had looked after the affairs of the whites in Swaziland for the past three years, still remained in Swaziland. He should like to know whether Mr. Crowe, or any other Boer, had any right of administration over Swaziland. He would like to know if the Swazis had admitted the Boer right to administer Swaziland, and if there was any evidence of it. He sincerely trusted the Swazis still practically preserved their independence, but he would ask the hon. Gentleman whether the Government had any evidence that the Boers had a practical administration over Swaziland at the present, or that the Swazis had gone back from the solemn declarations of the Swazi Queens and King, and the whole of the Chiefs, not to accept Boer domination. Had Mr. Crowe any practical power in Swaziland, and, if so, how did he propose to enforce it; and would Her Majesty's Government in any case permit an armed Boer military invasion and occupation of Swaziland, if the Swazis persisted in their resistance? These were matters on which, he thought, the House was entitled to some information.

*MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said, they really wanted information as to what has happened in Swaziland. The Under Secretary had persistently, and no doubt from the best motives, withheld the information from the House of Commons. But surely there must come a limit to the period when no information could be given, and when there must be circumstances which could be communicated to the House of Commons. Unless they could get information from the British Government, they would get no information of an authentic character, for they knew that efforts were made to pollute the supply and the source of news in the Transvaal.

The news which had reached this country from the Transvaal was misleading, and unless they received some assistance from the Government, they were left unjustifiably in the dark. The Under Secretary seemed to approach this matter from the standpoint of giving the Boers security of tenure in Swaziland, and to think they had got a right to dominate the South African people. He regarded it entirely from a different point of view. He had no sympathy whatever with the Boer intervention in Swaziland. During the last three years the Boer Government had been deliberately legislating against our country and our countrymen. They had been passing Act after Act specifically directed against our people, and instead of desiring to give them one inch of territory or one farthing of money, he would withhold from them everything, under all circumstances, until they behaved to this country with that courtesy and friendship they were entitled to demand from a friendly State. The Boer law, to which he called attention the other day, as to the possession of English silver money was a deliberate insult to this country. It was said that it was not enforced. He could very well believe that if an attempt were made to enforce it, it would precipitate the catastrophe which some people believed to be pending, and the long-suffering Englishmen in the Transvaal would make very short work of those who attempted to enforce it. They were told the other day that the access to the franchise in the Transvaal was similar to that of the United States and other great civilised countries. That was promptly contradicted, for indeed there was no similarity whatever. In the last three years effort after effort had been made, not secretly but openly, against their countrymen to contract the franchise in order to maintain the Boer dominion over them. The House had been misled. Up to the last moment they were denied access to information in regard to one of the most painful incidents in the history of this South African question—namely, what actually took place when Sir Evelyn Wood's declaration was made. It was said over and over again that a declaration was made guaranteeing the Swazis their independence. They were told, however, that that was an error. It was said that the contracting parties were the British Government on the one side and the Boers on the other; and that what was done between them did not affect the Swazis, and had not been communicated to them, save in the way of mere information. But at last the Blue Book was published, and the first thing that appeared on the face of the despatch was, that Her Majesty's Representative went to the Swazis, and in a way that they could and did understand, stated that their independence was guaranteed to them. He defied the Under Secretary to convince any Member of the House that an expression of that kind could, under any circumstances, have any other meaning than the plain meaning on the face of it. It might have been expedient for reasons of policy to disavow that declaration; it was apparently considered very important that it should not become known, for it was not until the eleventh hour that it was published. These seemed to be strong reasons why the House should sympathise with what was certainly the weaker party in this matter. He had never expected to hear a Member of the House claim as a matter of indulgence the fact that he had been the representative of an alien and a hostile power.

Dr. CLARK: That claim was never made. The statement is absolutely inaccurate.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said, the hon. Member who had just interrupted him stated that it was true that he had been a representative of the Boer Government, and he was not ashamed of the fact, because he said it was a poor country, and it was at war with this country at the time.

Dr. CLARK said, he had a dozen times explained his position as Consul General for several years of the South African Republic. The facts were these. He was Secretary of the Transvaal Independence Committee when the war began. After the independence of the Transvaal was secured by the Treaty of 1881, he was Consul General for several years. It was an honorary office, because there was very little work to do, and it was a very poor country. When gold was discovered, there was a good deal of commercial work, and three or four years ago he asked the Boer Government to appoint a paid official. They did so, and a paid official had been here as Consul

General for three or four years. When he acted as Secretary of the Independence Committee, the father of the present Secretary for Scotland and some 60 Members of Parliament were members of that Committee. He occupied that position during the war; and for several years afterwards he continued the work in the capacity of Consul General. At the time of the war the Transvaal was a British Colony, so that it could have no representative here.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER doubted whether the statement just made would alter the opinion held on the subject by any Member of the House. He could remember only too well the reports which reached this country of how our two field guns were whitend by the bullets of those whose independence the hon. Member was endeavouring to secure, and how our soldiers were shot down by men whom the hon. Member, a subject of the Queen, was doing his best to assist. He believed the hon. Member was the only man in the House who could fail to feel sympathy with the Swazis in this matter, or who could have the least desire, unless it was proved to be a political necessity of the highest importance, that the Transvaal should succeed in dominating Swaziland. We had had fair warning. It was reported, and could hardly be denied, that the President of the Transvaal had declared that if he did not get all he wanted from us, the Suzerainty of the Transvaal, he would appeal to the German Emperor. The House ought to be informed whether such a declaration was made. But whether it was made or not those who were in correspondence with the Transvaal knew that there was a very strong feeling that that course was open to the Boer, and that it was made much more easy by the action of the Government. He wished the Under Secretary to be more frank, and to tell the House clearly what was going on in the Transvaal; and especially whether the Government was, in any event, going to use force, to allow any of Her Majesty's subjects to use force in order to compel the Swazi people to submit to the worst white Government in the whole of Africa.

*DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire) said, he also wished to make a protest against the handing over of this brave but defenceless people to the rapacity of the Boers. He considered it nothing short of a disgrace that this country, which pretended to champion the freedom and liberty of oppressed nationalities in every part of the world, should betray and desert these people who trusted us in their hour of need. He called upon the Government to say that they would keep a sharp eye on this transaction, and see that the Swazis are not unduly oppressed.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said, he would not enter on the question of the relations of the Swazis to the Boers. He had come to the conclusion that, between the British authorities and the Boers, the unfortunate Swazis would be made short work of sooner or later. He desired to make a brief reply to the statements made last night by the hon. Member for West Belfast in reference to the appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson as High Commissioner of the Cape. Sir Hercules Robinson, in a letter in to-day's *Times*, had made a complete answer to the hon. Member's charge—that he was unable to fulfil the position of High Commissioner because he had financial connections in the Colony. The real ground of the hon. Gentleman's attack, however, was, that Sir Hercules Robinson had shown by his past career, not only at the Cape but in other portions of the Empire, that he was anxious to conduct the affairs of any Colony with which he might be connected in unison with the feeling of the people there. The Member for West Belfast said that the appointment was not in the interests of the Empire, but the fact was the appointment was almost unanimously approved of by the colonists, English and Dutch. He thought the hon. Member for West Belfast, who professed to speak in the name of Irishmen, might have left it to someone else to make an attack on Sir Hercules Robinson, who was a distinguished Irishman. Colonists looked with great interest and attention to the character and antecedents and actions of those sent out to govern them, and how could the colonists be expected to receive with general consideration a Governor who was attacked before he sailed by a Member of that House holding the position held by the Member for West Birmingham? The Member for West Belfast might perhaps be excused, for it was well known that somehow or other he was always haunted with the idea since he came into that House that he was the one man living whose duty it was to look after the British Empire in every part of the world. The hon. Member admitted that he had never been to the Cape and he knew nothing of those distant regions of which he spoke so glibly. He could assure the hon. Member for West Belfast that the interests of the colonies, if not of the Empire at large, got on tolerably well before he came into that House.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said, with regard to the points raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite as to the appointment of Sir Hercules Robinson, they had discussed it last night at considerable length, and he would only add that, as regarded the remarks of the Member for West Belfast as to Sir Hercules Robinson's financial operations in South Africa, he had given, in addition to the letter in *The Times* that morning, a categorical denial of the insinuations and accusations of the hon. Member. That denial was given in a personal interview that morning. With regard to the question of Swaziland, he did not want to go into its history. Therefore he passed by the question of the independence of Swaziland, which had recently been discussed on more than one occasion. He also declined to go into the question of the action of the Transvaal Government with regard to British subjects. He had always thought that some of the laws of the South African Republic were very inexpedient indeed. The position of the Government was this—that unless exceptional and adverse treatment had been shown to British subjects they were not entitled to interfere, nor would it be expedient. With regard to the foreign relations of the Transvaal and the speech of President Kruger, he was not sorry to have that opportunity of referring to the matter, and, as he had said before with regard to that speech, it was perfectly immaterial to the British Government what President Kruger may or may not have said on the occasion. The telegraphic summary was not exactly in accordance with what he did say. They adhered, as previous Governments had adhered, to the clause of the London Convention of 1884, in which it was asserted that the South African Republic in its foreign relations was within the sphere of British influence, and would not be allowed to make any new treaty or arrangement with any foreign State except subject to the consent of Her Majesty's Government. This Government would take care always to control the foreign relations of the Transvaal.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Did you communicate that statement formally to the Transvaal Government?

Mr. BUXTON said, they had not done so. It was not for them to do so unless the question arose whether the Transvaal had committed any breach of the convention. Of course the Transvaal Government knew what was said in Parliament with regard to them, and they had received warning, if warning were required, in the most emphatic terms. Finally, he was asked for information as to the present position in Swaziland, which he should deal with without touching the history of the matter. He did not understand what the hon. Member meant by the reference to the organic proclamation. The position was this:—It was created under the Convention of 1893. It was a document which it was open to the Swazis to sign or not. They had declined to sign, and the proclammation disappeared of its own accord. The administration of Swaziland came under the fresh Convention of 1894, with the distinct reservation of tribal independence which he had more than once pointed out. Then with regard to the action of the Transvaal Government as to the mobilisation of the forces on the borders when their Commissioners were going in to meet the Chiefs, they were justified in doing so. The question was whether there might not have been a rising, as there was a considerable amount of distrust at the time. The Transvaal Government would not be justified in sending an armed force into Swaziland when the Commission was sitting. He was thankful the Swazis had not been led away by ill-advised counsellors, but had come to the conclusion that they would be able to meet the Boers in a peaceful way. The information of the Government was that they had come to a meeting in a peaceful way, and that the administration of Swaziland was practically now in the hands of the Boers under peaceful conditions and with the assent of the Swazis. He hoped that position would be maintained, because whatever opinions hon. Members might hold, they could not wish that there should be actual fighting between the Boers and the Swazis. That could only have one result, and it was for the interests of all parties that there should be no hostile movement. He hoped the Swazis would be ready to submit to the administration of the law with the reservations the Government had made for them and to the guarantees which the Government fully intended to carry out. This was a logical conclusion to the action taken for many years past in regard to the three countries (Swaziland, the Transvaal, and England), and it had come to this—that Swaziland would now practically be administered by the Boers, but they had reserved for the Swazis all the rights that they had not parted with.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Is there any official statement or evidence to show that the Swazis have admitted, or put themselves under, the actual administration of the Boers?

[There was no answer.]

## THE BERRIEW EDUCATION SCHEME.

*MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) moved a reduction of £500 in the salary of the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland), in order to call attention to a very grave departure from the ordinary practice of the Education Department. The matter to which he referred was connected with the scheme prepared by the Charity Commissioners under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act for a school in the parish of Berriew in the county of Montgomery. The School was founded in 1652 by Humphry Jones. In order to show the Church character impressed on that school when it was founded he stated that the founder conveyed lands and other property to trustees, among whom were two clergymen of the Church of England, and it was important to observe the date at which this was done. It was in 1652, and the two clergymen in question were Vicars deprived by the Commonwealth. In 1738, a clergyman was a master, and the children were instructed in the principles of the Church of England. In 1816, the school had got into a condition of some disorder, and a petition was presented to the Master of the Rolls. Under the authority of the Master of the Rolls a scheme was drawn up which confirmed the absolute Church character of the Foundation. It was used as a charity school for teaching and instructing children in the principles and the doctrines of the Church of England, and the children were required to attend church on Sundays and "other usual days" for Divine Service, unless their parents objected. The trustees included the Vicar of the parish, and they were to appoint such masters as were members of the Church of England, "of sober life and conversation." All the documents he had consulted showed this Foundation to have possessed a distinctively Church character, and yet the recent scheme of the Charity Commissioners proposed to alter the Church character of the school entirely.

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W. R., Rotherham) said, the hon. Gentleman could not hold him responsible for the character of the scheme. The scheme came from the Charity Commissioners, and during the time it was in the Education Department his attention was not called to the subject by any objections; and he passed it on in the ordinary course. He did not receive any objection to it; and, therefore, he had none to answer.

*MR. TALBOT said, it was a scheme about which Churchmen felt very strongly, because under it the Vicar of the Parish, who had always hitherto been a Trustee, was forbidden to give religious instruction. A Petition against the scheme was presented on September 14 of last year, signed by the statutory number of ratepayers. On November 23 a letter was read from the Education Department stating that 12 out of the twenty signatories had withdrawn their signatures before the statutory two months had expired. A letter had been sent to the Department pointing out that there was no provision in the Act for the withdrawal of such signatures. The scheme was, in consequence, not laid on the Table of the House. In his judgment, the Education Department had acted *ultra vires* in this matter.

But supposing the Department had the power to allow the withdrawal of the signatures, he contended that they should have given notice to those who signed the Petition, in order that an opportunity might have been afforded to others to substitute their names for those who had withdrawn. A complaint had reached him to the effect that those who signed this Petition, and then withdrew their names, did so because they were told something which was not in accordance with the facts of the case. They said that the signatures had been withdrawn because a threat had been made to the effect that if the Petition succeeded the Endowments would be taken away from the parish and a School Board would follow. No such result could have possibly followed, and if the people were so informed it was an unwarrantable use of an improper argument.

SIR R. E. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said that this question was of some constitutional importance. It was important that the House should know that the sanction of these schemes depended on an Order in Council, and when that Order had been made its effect and result could not be questioned in a Court of law. It was, in his opinion, clear that what had been done in this case was never intended should take place. The 15th Section of the Act of 1873 was distinct in stating that—

> "If any Petition has been presented the scheme shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament;"

the procedure following the usual course when Parliament was not sitting. He asked the House to observe what a door was opened to possible collusive or improper action if any departure from established practice were sanctioned. The only protection the opponents had was the protection of petition; through a Petition they could present to the House any objections they had to a scheme. They were informed, rightly or wrongly, of what happened in this case. Let them consider, however, what might happen. A Petition might be presented by influential people; they might believe the matter was going to be discussed—but behind their backs, they knowing nothing about it; the Department informed Her Majesty in Council that no Petition had been presented because the signatures had been withdrawn. There was not the slightest suggestion anywhere in the Act of Parliament that a Petition should be withdrawn, still less that signatures should be withdrawn. That was, in some shape or form, the action of the Education Department, without the consent of the right hon. Gentleman, under a complete misapprehension of what the law was. The fact was, that those who had had *bona fide* objections to raise could not get them raised. With regard to this particular case, it appeared, on the evidence before them, that individual signatories were visited and different reasons given them why they should not oppose the scheme. The persons who had, *bona fide*, obtained a Petition to be presented had no means of knowing what was being done. The result of such action was, that the House lost for ever any chance of having the scheme investigated. When a question was put to the right hon. Gentleman, the other day, he said the Department had acted in accordance with the course taken by a previous Government in the Dauncy case. That case, he was sure, never came before the Law Officers. They did not charge the right hon. Gentleman himself with any dereliction of duty, but they protested against being deprived of the opportunity of discussing this scheme. If his hon. Friend was right as to the history of the Charity, and no doubt he was right, it was plain it was a case in which Parliament would have interfered. Whatever might be the excuse which the right hon. Gentleman might be able to give for the conduct of the Department in this case he hoped the protest to-day would make it impossible for anything of the kind to occur in the future.

*MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire) felt bound to intervene in the Debate in consequence of some remarks which fell from the hon. Member for the Oxford University (Mr. Talbot). The question of the Church character of the foundation was decided in the negative by the Charity Commissioners after a very full inquiry—an inquiry which lasted a long period, during which, if he rightly understood the procedure, everything which could possibly be brought forward was advanced before the Commissioners. The gift was simply and purely for a free school, without any declaration that it should be of a Church character. He must add, that the proceedings which culminated in the Chancery suit were material. They showed that the school had ceased to exist. If it was a Church school, which was entirely denied, a greater disgrace to the Church could not possibly be conceived. The funds were in the hands of a sole trustee, from whom they were with difficulty recovered, the school-house was in ruins, the scholars were non-existent, and the master was a man of bad character. Under those circumstances—and only under those circumstances—was the Chancery scheme passed. Lord Liverpool was Premier and Lord Eldon was Lord Chancellor, and, naturally, clauses were put in insisting on Church of England instruction. The point he wished to insist upon was, that the insertion of those clauses was a usurpation; not a confirmation of an existing Church character of the school. As regarded the scheme itself he was afraid he must ask the indulgence of the House while he went a little into the educational policy of which the scheme was part—the scheme being only one of a group of schemes. When it became the duty of the Montgomeryshire Joint Educational Committee to set the Intermediate Education Act in motion they naturally considered the question of the existing Endowments in the different parishes. Amongst them was the Endowment at Berriew. The Committee reported :—

> "It will be noticed that the Proposals for the County Scheme deal only with the funds arising from the County Rate and Government Grants, and do not include any of the Educational Endowments of the county. The Committee believe that, with the exception of Deythur, all of these Endowments are at present employed in the support of public elementary schools. Inasmuch as the provision of Elementary Education is now a legal obligation on the owners and occupiers of property, and as in the coming Session large additional grants will probably be made for it at the public charge, the Committee suggest that advantage should be taken of the extension to them made by the Welsh Intermediate Education Act of the powers now vested in the Charity Commissioners and the Education Department, to re-organise these Endowments, and at the same time to secure them for the parishes to which they were originally given."

Then they went on to say,—

> "The Committee are of opinion that the interests of the parishes will be effectually protected by applying these Endowments in securing for the children belonging to them education in County Intermediate Schools; and they invite suggestions and information from the trustees or managers and all interested in the Endowments which may facilitate the task of preparing a schemes or scheme for this purpose."

In September 1892 a meeting was held with the Berriew Trustees, by the Joint Committee, of which meeting the minute was as follows :—

> "After full discussion the Berriew Trustees stated their willingness to concur in the Establishment of a scheme under the Welsh Act for the administration of the Endowment; such scheme to provide for the maintenance of an Upper Department in the Public Elementary School."

The scheme included the clause to which hon. Members opposite took such exception, the one which required that the religious instruction should be given by members of the teaching staff only. That was a clause which was inserted in all Welsh schemes. Not a single official objection was taken to the scheme. There was some private discussion, no doubt, but not a single objection was taken officially to any of the provisions of the scheme, either before the Charity Commission or before the Education Department. The hon. Member for the Oxford University spoke of the withdrawal of signatures being obtained by misrepresentation.

*MR. TALBOT said he did not intend to use those words; what he meant to say was that the signatures would not have been withdrawn but for certain representations made to the signatories.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN understood the hon. Gentleman to go further than that, and to speak of improper influences.

*MR. TALBOT said he stated that improper arguments were addressed to the signatories, and that if the case had been properly put before the people an entirely different impression would have been left on their minds. It was in consequence of improper arguments that the signatures were withdrawn.

*MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN said that, with regard to the fallacious arguments, he might say that the Endowment consisted of a sum which was in consequence of agricultural depression a little over £70 a year. The County Council gave an additional grant of £73 a year on the condition that an Upper Department was established in the School. This was in pursuance of the general policy of the Joint Education Committee to diffuse Secondary Education as widely as possible among the people of the country. The argument which was used to secure the withdrawal of the signatures from the petition was that the additional grant made to the foundation by the County Council was given on the condition and could only be given on the condition that the School was of an undenominational and not of a denominational kind, and that the endowment, if not used for the support of the School, would be applied for scholarships in other Schools. He was told at first hand by one who signed the petition that he would not have put his name to it had he not been led to understand that the passing of the Scheme would involve the parish in a very heavy expense, and it was on being assured that such was not the case—that on the contrary, it would mean the grant to the parish of a sum very nearly the amount of the endowment—that this particular gentleman withdrew his name from the petition. The grounds, therefore, on which he supported the Scheme, were that the endowment was not a Church endowment, and that the Scheme was one that would be most beneficial to the parish, and the withdrawing of signatures from the petition only expressed the general feeling existing in the parish as to what was right and fair on the subject.

*MR. ACLAND said, there was no doubt that the question raised by the hon. Member for Oxford University was really of serious importance. The Berriew Scheme in due course reached the Education Department. Not a single objection was made to it while it was in the Department. If those who had got up the petition against the scheme at a subsequent stage had made any objection to it while it was in the Education Department he should have investigated the matter. However, he had submitted two questions in regard to the Scheme to the Law Officers. The first was whether, when a petition had been lodged, signatures to it could be afterwards withdrawn. To that question the Law Officers had replied in the negative. The great mistake was in allowing the signatures to be withdrawn. There was no intention, of course, on the part of the Education Department to do any wrong in the matter. But it was believed that it was a very old tradition held by the Department that if those who signed petitions asked to have their signatures withdrawn, their request should be complied with. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight referred to the precedent of the Dauntrey Charity. The facts of that case were these: The first Dauntrey Scheme was rejected in the House of Lords, because as he was given to understand, there was no time to debate in the House of Commons. The second Dauntrey Scheme was believed to be a scheme agreed upon by nearly all the parties interested; but a petition was lodged against it at the Educational Office, at the instance, as he was informed, of the hon. Member for Walworth (Mr. Saunders). It was pointed out to the hon. Member that his petition was partly based upon a misunderstanding; and shortly afterwards a request was sent him by a large number of the signatories asking that the petition should be withdrawn. The petition, therefore, in that case, which would otherwise have laid the scheme, before Parliament, was withdrawn. It mattered very little from the legal point of view whether the reasons for which the petitioners made their objection were adequate or not. He understood they were all agreed that in no future Corporation or Governing body, a body of petitioning ratepayers, should not be allowed to withdraw any petition to lay a scheme before Parliament, even though they discover that they had made a mistake in presenting the petition. If they had made a mistake, the mistake must be explained within the walls of Parliament and nowhere else; and that in any case Parliament should have the opportunity of discussing the scheme. But the Berriew Scheme had now become law and, therefore, the second question he had submitted to the Law Officers was whether there was any means for bringing a scheme which had passed again before Parliament. The Law Officers had asked for some little time for further consideration before they answered that question. He could only say that if he could devise any reasonable means, even by an Act of Parliament itself, by which this Berriew Scheme could be brought before Parliament for such discussion as it ought to have received, he should be very glad to adopt that means.

Amendment by leave withdrawn,

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) called attention to the appointment of Mr. Sadler as Director of Special Inquiries and Reports to the Education Department, a new office which had been created by the Vice-President of the Council. There was a salary of £650 rising to £800 a year attached to the office, and, therefore, it was one of the best appointments in the Education Department. On inquiring what were the duties of this newly created official, he had been informed by the Vice-President that they were to collect and report on such information on educational matters at home and abroad as the Department was constantly in need of. He was not going to say one word against Mr. Sadler, but he asked, in the interest of the public service, whether it was right or fair that the 93 Inspectors, the 51 Sub-Inspectors, the 162 Assistant Inspectors, and the whole staff of the Department, numbering nearly 500 officers, should have been passed over, and a young man, who had never been in any branch of the public service, brought in and placed in this good position at a salary about the seventeenth largest in the Department. He knew an Inspector, who lately retired, who had been for forty years in the Service, and it was only recently he got a salary of £600 a year. This gentleman was retired after forty years' service, his maximum salary having been £600; and now he saw a young man, a little over thirty, appointed at a higher salary than he himself was able to receive after forty years' good work in the public service. What was the effect of this on the public service generally? There was a debate in that House in 1877 on a celebrated appointment to the Stationery Office, and they had wonderful speeches from Mr. Childers and the right hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), who until recently occupied the position of President of the Board of Trade, in which they laid down the law most emphatically. Upon that occasion Mr. Childers said :—

> "At a time when they were doing their very best to improve the *status* of Civil Servants it would be an unfortunate course to adopt a new departure from that sound principle, and in practice have to say to men who had nearly reached the top of the tree : 'No matter how long your service or how great your efficiency, you will not be promoted to the headship of your department, but we will take a junior clerk, or another officer, and put him in.'"

In that case there was a junior clerk put in ; but this case was worse, because this gentleman was not even in the public service, and yet he was put over the heads of all the officers. He was not going to say one word against Mr. Sadler personally, but what he condemned was the practice which had been adopted in this instance of bringing in a complete outsider and passing him over the heads of men who had spent twenty, thirty, and forty years in the public service. This was not the only case, for last year he had to call attention to another instance, whilst one of his hon. Friends intended to call attention to the promotion of a Mr. Levy over other officials of long service.

MR. ACLAND : Mr. Levy is not outside the office.

MR. BARTLEY acknowledged that Mr. Sadler's case was the worst, for he had been taken from outside the public service and passed over the heads of a great many deserving men. If time had permitted he would have gone into the question of whether this appointment was really needed. The other day the Member for South Manchester asked the right hon. gentleman whether he was aware that the appointment of Mr. Sadler had not received the general approval of those interested in educational questions.

MR. ACLAND : Those were not the words he used, and that is an exactly opposite interpretation. What he asked me was whether it was not the fact that the appointment had been received with universal approval.

MR. BARTLEY said he would read what passed from "Hansard" :—

> "SIR HENRY ROSCOE : May I ask the right hon. gentleman whether he is aware that the appointment of Mr. Sadler does not receive general approval from those interested in educational questions ?"

That was the statement which appeared, not only in "Hansard," but in every newspaper which reported the matter. He contended that there was no necessity for making this appointment. The work of collecting these reports and so forth was already done by the Education Department, and if there was anything further to be done there were scores of officials who could efficiently do it. Again, all the officers of the Education Department, from the inspectors downwards, had to submit to a competitive examination, and, commencing at a low salary, had gradually to work themselves into a better position. Mr. Sadler, however, commenced at the top, he had had no experience in the work like these other officers had, but they were told he had acted as secretary to the University Extension Society, and was a student of Christ Church. These no doubt were very important offices, but there were men connected with the Education Department who had taken a keen interest in the work of education, who had done much without fee or reward for the extension of University teaching, and he said they were perfectly competent to carry out the work which Mr. Sadler had been appointed for. If the appointment was needed, and Mr. Sadler was most competent, still there was no justification for appointing him, unless he was the only man who could possibly discharge these duties. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to get up in his place and say that there was no other person in the Education Department competent to do the work, for he must know there were many men who were not receiving nearly as much as it was proposed to give Mr. Sadler, but who were thoroughly competent to fill this office. When they found that this was an entirely new office that had been created, that the gentleman who had been selected to fill it was a supporter of the Government, and that he had been picked out from outside the public service, it naturally made people suspicious. The right hon. Gentleman would probably say that it was a great loss to Mr. Sadler to take this appointment. If so, it was a pity he took it; there were a great many men in the Education Department who would be glad of it, and he himself was very suspicious of gentlemen who sacrificed themselves for a good appointment of that sort. It was important in the interest of the public service to teach those who had been induced to enter that service by the competitive system, that worth and merit would not be passed over; but they would absolutely do away with the *esprit de corps* and energy of the public service if young men were to be taken from the outside, and passed over the heads of men who had given the best years of their life to the service of the State. As a protest against the course that had been adopted in this matter he should move to reduce the Vote by £650. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman would be able to carry the Vote, but he would be making a precedent which some day would be seriously used against him, and hon. Gentlemen opposite who supported the Vote would find they were undermining the whole of the public service by this system of importing persons from the outside. Now that they had the competitive system of entering the public service these special appointments should be reduced to a minimum. Of course he recognised that it was sometimes necessary to import an outsider in the case of an appointment of a technical character. But this was not a technical appointment, and there were at least fifty men in the Department who could fill it equally as well as Mr. Sadler. They ought to strive to maintain the stability of their public service by preventing that service being endangered by political intrigues, or by any jobbery which might creep in. He did not say that this was a case of political jobbery, but if it was not it had the look of it, and it was for the right hon. Gentleman to prove that it was not. He begged to move the reduction of the vote by £650, and intimated that he should press the amendment to a division.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston), formally seconded the Amendment.

*Sir J. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) desired, before the right hon. Gentleman replied, to say a few words on behalf of the individual whose name had been mentioned, and by whose appointment it seemed to be considered a job had been perpetrated. Mr. Sadler had never been a political supporter of his and was never likely to be. How far political views had influenced his appointment he knew not, but he wished to say this of one he had known for many years. Mr. Sadler's career at the University had been a most distinguished and successful one, and his qualifications for the post to which he had been appointed were rare. As an Undergraduate at Trinity he had taken the highest honours in Moderations and Final Classical School. He had then been elected a student of Christ Church, and had rendered valuable service to that great House for many years. He had long been Secretary to the Delegates for University Extension. By his writing, his speeches, and his personal intercourse, he had, in a remarkable way stimulated and promoted that important movement. Everybody who had the pleasure of his acquaintance knew him to be a man of high abilities, genial temperment, and great activity in bringing University teaching into connexion with the masses of the people. He felt that the Department was to be congratulated on having acquired the services of a man of such special qualifications for the post to which Mr. Sadler had been appointed.

Mr. JEBB (Cambridge University) said that as one who was associated with Mr. Sadler on the Commission of Secondary Education he felt it would be a matter of fairness to bear testimony t his peculiar fitness for the post. Mr. Sadler had devoted long and thorough study to the principles and methods of education as understood in this country and in other countries also. The treatment of education as a science was a movement of comparitively recent origin. It had a large and growing literature of its own. In that science Mr. Sadler was a specialist, and an eminent specialist. The promotion he had received was not to an office of the ordinary kind at the Education Department, but a special office for which he had special attainments, and he believed the right hon. Gentleman had been thoroughly happy in his choice without implying the slightest disparagement to be distinguished men who form the ordinary staff of the Education Department.

*Mr. ACLAND said the hon. Member for Islington had persisted in saying that he had only raised one question. He demurred to that, because more than one question had been raised in connexion with the distinguished office over which he was now placed. The hon. Member had said that there was a great flavour of jobbery about this appointment. He had said that Mr. Sadler—and he was grateful to the right hon. Member for the University of Oxford and the hon. Member for the Cambridge University for bearing testimony to that gentleman's distinguished character and record—was a supporter of the Government, but as Mr. Sadler's educational qualifications had been spoken to by opponents of the present Government he need no go into that. The hon. Member asked whether it was a fact that Mr. Sadler was appointed a bursar of Christ Church—[Mr. Swift MacNeill: "Christ Church 'College'"]—in succession to him. He could not conceive what bearing it had on the matter that Mr. Sadler was appointed by the governing body of Christ Church a bursar of Christ Church when he ceased to act ten years ago. If the question meant anything, it seemed to imply some insinuation against himself. The hon. Member mentioned the case of Mr. Levy, who had received a small addition to his salary of £100. Would it be believed that one Member of the House of Commons more than once addressed him on the question of promotion for some of the senior clerks in the office, that he received petitions from two or three of these gentlemen, of whom Mr. Levy was one, and, considering the great skill which he had in a particular direction in connection with the school accounts and registers, he, with the sanction and approval practically of the Head of the Department, gave Mr. Levy £100 more, and in doing so he was trying to meet what he was asked to do by an hon. Member opposite. He was asked—Did he know that Mr. Levy was a Member of the National Liberal Club? Supposing when he was a private Member he had asked about Mr. Milner, an old friend, the distinguished Head of the Inland Revenue, whether he was a Member of a Unionist Club and whether he had been Secretary to the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and why that man had been appointed Head of the Inland Revenue? He should have deserved and should have received the scorn and indignation of the general body of Conservative Members. And so far as belonging to a Club went, he supposed the great bulk of the Civil Service belonged to some Club or another Sir George Kekewich, for example, belonged to the Junior Carlton, and he frequently lunched with him there. He had had to appoint five Examiners in the Department. It had also fallen to his lot to appoint a large number of inspectors, including science and art inspectors. As to the whole of these men he had no more idea of their politics than the hon. Member had himself. As to Mr. Sadler, he believed it would be of the highest value to the Education Department to have a small branch, presided over by a man specially qualified, to mak inquiries at home and abroad, into education at large. The idea was to get somebody who would bear the same relation to the Education Department that Mr Llewellyn Smith, who was appointed from the outside, and who was already a distinguished member of the Civil Service bore to a particular Department of the Board of Trade. They wanted a gentleman who would be able to make inquiries somewhat on the same lines. They took Mr. Llewellyn Smith's appointment as an analogy. His salary was the same, and he would add that, notwithstanding what he had often said as to the distinguished talents of members of the Education Department, he thought that Mr. Sadler was the fittest man for the post. And as to the objection of his being appointed from the outside, he would point out that Dr. Middleton, one of the most distinguished antiquarians in this country, was appointed to be the head of South Kensington Museum as a pure outsider; while nobody had complained that outsiders, from the point of view of the office, had been appointed heads of the Home Office and Post Office. In establishing a small, new branch like this, he submitted it was quite fair and reasonable, after careful consideration, to choose a man who, as had been acknowledged by the representatives of the Universities, was the fittest for the post.

*Sir W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) pointed out that the Education Vote had reached the enormous sum of £6,785,000, and that out of that sum no less than £70,567 went for expenditure on the office in Whitehall. The question the Committee had to consider was, whether they were justified in spending £2,000 a year more for the purpose of making inquiries on the subject of education. What was the exact position of the educational question today? The system of elementary education in this country was one of the most expensive that human ingenuity could devise, and therefore he felt bound to ask in what direction would this special inquiry tend? He assumed it would tend chiefly in the direction of secondary or of technical education. But they had a Commission sitting now at great cost to deal with the question of secondary education. He should like some more information as to what really this gentleman's duties were to be. Whatever his abilities might be, this, at all events, might be urged, that he was a young man. He would have to deal with very technical and very difficult questions, and he ventured to urge, in regard to these matters of education, on which Mr. Sadler would have to supply information, that there were gentlemen who had passed more than half an official life in the Education Office who, with much greater facility, would be able to procure the same. He should support the hon. Member in the Division, not in any sense as a condemnation of the right hon. Gentleman's choice, but because he thought and believed, with his knowledge of the Education Department, and knowing also the enormous sums they were now spending on education, and with a Commission sitting with regard to Secondary Education, and with the vast amount of information they had brought together, this extra expenditure ought not to be incurred.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said, that when this question was first asked with reference to Mr. Sadler's qualifications, the hon. Member for South Manchester got up and asked the Vice President of the Council whether it was not a notorious fact that Mr. Sadler's appointment had given universal satisfaction in educational circles. That was his recollection distinctly, and if "Hansard" had put in the word "not" it was only one of many instances of "Hansard's" carelessness in printing the Debates of this House. He should certainly take the opinion of the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Oxford and the hon. Member for Cambridge with reference to Mr. Sadler's qualifications, and should support the Minister of Education against the proposed reduction. He was glad there were two such Gentlemen in the House—on that side of the House—as the representatives of these Universities who had come forward in a matter of justice between man and man and thrown the shield of their protection over a gentleman who had been represented to be the *protégé* of a gentleman who had perpetrated a job. He did not know Mr. Sadler personally. He knew him by reputation, and it gave him great pleasure to know that he had been appointed to this office.

Mr. BARTLEY said, he desired, as a matter of personal explanation, to say he made no imputation against Mr. Sadler. He had said nothing against Mr. Sadler. His argument was that it was unfair to put him over the heads of 97 per cent. of the people in the Government Department.

Mr. T. W. LEGH (Lancashire, S. W., Newton) said, that as the right hon. Gentleman had not mentioned the name of Mr. Levy, he desired to know whether he was entitled to go into his case now, or should he wait until the Division on Mr. Sadler's case had been taken ?

Mr. SPEAKER said, it would be more convenient to have this case settled first.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he should go into the Lobby with his hon Friend, not on the merits of Mr. Sadler, for the merits of that gentleman had nothing whatever to do with the question, but for this reason. Here was a Department spending stupendous sums, and costing about £250,000 a year for administration, and, at a given moment it came to this House with the confession that it was not competent to do its own work, and it must have an entirely new office, with an entirely new officer and assistants, at a cost of something like £1,500 or £2,000 a year. He protested most vehemently against such a system. He did most strongly protest against this House being constantly asked to vote extra sums for new offices and officers to do the work the Department ought to do itself. If this Department was not competent to make such inquiries as were referred, what was it good for. This system of first of all setting up great public Departments with enormous salaries, and then of the head of one of the Departments coming to the House and confessing they could not perform the duties for which they were established, and asking the House to appoint extra officers with high salaries, was perfectly monstrous.

The House divided :—Ayes, 207; Noes, 71.—(Division List No. 37).

Mr. T. W. LEGH said the case to which he wished to draw attention was one which, despite the disclaimer of the right hon. Gentleman, bore a strong family resemblance to that of Mr. Sadler. It was that of a certain Mr. Levy, who was until recently one of the first-class clerks in the Education Department at a salary of £500 a year. This gentleman was recently promoted over the heads of four senior first-class clerks. He has been dignified with the somewhat pompous title of Examiner of School Accounts and Registers, and £100 a year has been added to his salary. In answer to a question which he put the other day, the right hon. Gentleman stated that the duties of the new post were of a more extended and more important character than those formerly performed, and that Mr. Levy was selected because of his special acquaintance with the kind of work involved. He added that the appointment was strongly pressed upon him by the heads of the Department. If that was the case he presumed there was a minute to that effect, and that the right hon. Gentleman would produce it. If there was no minute, he thought he was justified in assuming that this alleged demand from the heads of the Department was of somewhat liberal interpretation. Hints from autocrats like the right hon. gentleman were invariably accepted in the same spirit by their subordinates, and if the right hon. Gentleman expressed a wish to make a particular appointment he would find his subordinates ready to support it.

Mr. ACLAND : I can only say that in this case that is not true.

Mr. LEGH said the appointment was justified because this kind of work had increased. Was he prepared to demand an increase of salary for every official that had increased work to do ? But whatever the work was it was not of an extraordinarily absorbing character, because Mr. Levy was a prominent and energetic member of the National Liberal Club, and he was given to understand that he spent a great deal of his time during official hours in that institution. He occupied an important position as a member of the club, and was described as hon. secretary of the political economy circle. It was a great relief to know that political economy was studied at all at the National Liberal Club, because he was under the impression that the new Unionism and the new Radicalism had banished political economy to Uranus and Saturn, if not further. But the right hon. Gentleman must not be surprised if he pressed for an explanation of this appointment. There was a very strong analogy between this case and the last. Both gentlemen held extreme Radical views. There were two distinct principles involved. One was the promotion of an official over the heads of his senior colleagues; the other was the creation of a new office at the will of a Minister, and the consequent addition to the public expenditure. He desired to protest against the difficulty in bringing matters of this kind forward. On Supplementary Estimates they were forbidden to discuss the policy of the department in Committee, on the Vote on Account they were asked to confine themselves to questions of importance; on Report they could not take a Division, and if they waited till the Estimates came on nobody was present to listen to what they had to say.

*Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) wished to call the attention of the Chief Secretary to the proceedings of one of the inspectors recently appointed to inquire into distress in the West of Ireland. He referred to the inspector who had reported that there was no exceptional distress in portions of South Mayo. This inspector was a man who had no previous experience qualifying him for the duties of the post, and if he made visits to certain districts his visits were of so cursory a character that none of the chief inhabitants knew he made them. The priests of two places had written saying the inspector had not, to their knowledge, visited their districts. The reports of this gentleman were therefore entirely impugned, and the Chief Secretary was making a great mistake in relying upon his reports. The reports showed that this gentleman had applied certain tests of his own to elicit whether exceptional distress prevailed in particular districts or not. One of his favourite tests was the extent of the out-door relief, and another whether seed potatoes had been applied for or not. These were not reliable tests as to the prevalence of distress. One of the first duties of the inspector would have been to have visited the priests, for they could give him more reliable information, and without doubt they were most deserving of being consulted in such matters. On previous occasions the poor people had paid very heavily for the seed potatoes, which afterwards turned out to be entirely useless, and therefore they were very shy of applying again. Neither the number of applications for outdoor relief nor the number of applications for seed potatoes was a proper test as to the existence of exceptional distress. He had applied another test. Meeting a crowd of persons asking for employment, he asked them would they be willing to work for seven shillings a week. He evidently thought they would be disgusted at being offered such meagre payment, but evidently he was surprised when he found they were willing to accept employment at seven shillings a week. He contended that persons willing to work for such a low rate of wages must be in a condition of distress. Another mode of procedure by this gentleman was, that when he found in any particular district that the out-door relief was not high, and that seed potatoes had not been applied for, he ruled out such a district as having no exceptional distress; and in other places where those tests fitted in his reports were identical. There was one matter of importance, to which he desired to draw the Chief Secretary's attention. For ten years he represented South Mayo, and this was absolutely the first occasion on which he had to make an appeal for assistance, and he asserted there could be no stronger proof that exceptional distress exists in the constituency. He had ventured to point out to the Chief Secretary a certain district in which a local work of vast importance, an unfinished Government work, might be completed for a small sum. It would be of great service there for the purpose of relieving distress, but apparently the Government, through their officials, objected to carry out this useful work. He (Mr. O'Brien) was aware of the system under which relief works had been carried out in Ireland, and, to put it briefly, the system was that these relief works should be good for nothing. He would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that he went to Ireland to administer the affairs of Ireland as Irishmen themselves would administer them.

MR. MACNEILL : To try to.

*MR. O'BRIEN ventured to say, that if that was the Chief Secretary's intention he was far from realizing it, because that was not the way Irishmen would relieve distress in their own country. The Chief Secretary should remember he was dealing with a most unfortunate country, which never had the benefit from two bodies which always contributed to the prosperity of other countries, namely, the landlords and the Government whose great expenditure fosters and encourages industries while between the Government and the landlords Ireland was depleted and impoverished. The money raised in Ireland was actually carried away from Ireland and spent in England and elsewhere. The right hon. Gentleman ought also to consider that he was the Chief Executive Officer of a Power which persists in exercising their rule over Ireland, and insists upon exploiting the resources of Ireland. According to the best authorities Ireland was over-taxed one hundred per cent., yet, notwithstanding this, the taxation of Ireland goes on increasing year after year, while none of it is spent in Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would turn over a new leaf, and that in future he would deal more humanely with those poor people than he had done.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, he had listened with much attention and some concern to one portion of the hon. Member's speech in his criticism of the appointment of Mr. Levy, and if the hon. Member could substantiate what he said he should be pleased to go into the Lobby with him. One of his statements was that Mr. Levy had been appointed to a superior position, over the heads of two or three colleagues, and that Mr. Levy spent part of his official time within the precincts of the National Liberal Club. If the hon. Member could prove that Mr. Levy spent any portion of his official time in the Club or anywhere else when he ought to be discharging his official duties, then he saw no reason why he should not be dismissed from the office he now held.

MR. LEGH said, what he said was that Mr. Levy used to spend part of his official time in the Club. He did not feel called upon to give the names of his informants.

MR. JOHN BURNS did not think the hon. Member had improved his position. If the charge could not be proved it ought to be withdrawn in an unqualified manner. He gathered from what he said that the hon. Member was ignorant of the economic, social, and political views of Mr. Levy. If the hon. Member could not prove his charge now the matter should be deferred, to give him an opportuuity. Then they had Mr. Sadler objected to because he was an outsider. He was in favour of inside promotion. In the other case objection was taken to the promotion of an insider. Not only had a charge of favouritism been made, but it had been said that this gentleman had been promoted entirely for political reasons. He had always believed that the English Civil Service, fairly speaking, was the best Civil Service in the world, and as a rule Civil Servants had been promoted from the inside where they were qualified for promotion, and where they had not been appointed, there had been fairly good reasons for going outside. He hoped that in this case the Vice President of the Council would either disprove the charge which had been made against Mr. Levy, or defer the appointment until the charge had been enquired into.

MR. A. J. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said he knew more of Mr. Levy than probably any other person in the House. When he went to the Education Department, in 1880, Mr. Levy served under him for five and a half years, and he had also been in the Department during Mr. Forster's time, and he knew no public servant who was more loyal, industrious or useful than Mr. Levy. He was therefore astonished to find that any hon. Member should attack that gentleman because he happened to be the Secretary of a Political Economy Society which met at the National Liberal Club. Mr. Levy was highly qualified to deal with these questions, and he was sure that the hon. Member for Newton would regret the introduction of Mr. Levy's name in this discussion. Civil servants were not present to defend themselves, and a man who rendered loyal service to the public ought not to be attacked by name in the House, no matter what his politics might be. What would be said if Members supporting the Government were to attack members of the Civil Service who belonged to the Carlton, or other political clubs? He was introduced to Mr. Levy by the late Lord Sandford, who spoke of him in terms of unqualified approval and admiration, and as being one of the ablest men in the Education Department. He was sure that the late Vice President (Sir W. Hart Dyke) would bear testimony to the services of this admirable servant, and he would be the last man to neglect his duty. Mr. Levy's promotion had been exceedingly slow in the Department, probably because he did not enter with University credentials. He trusted the hon. Gentleman would withdraw the statement he had made.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) called attention to the differential and preferential rates on English railways. It was a matter of great importance to the agricultural districts. Preferential rates on English railroads were a millstone round the neck of the English farmer and English producer. In his county he was told that it was cheaper to send shrimps over to Russia and get them back by sea, and onions over to Holland, than to send them by rail 25 miles to London. Why did not the Department put a stop to this state of things? They could dt so by means of the Railway Regulation Act of 1873, under which the Board of Trade were empowered to appoint a person to bring a case before the Railway Commissioners. The President of the Board of Trade might say that he had no money to do this, but the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888 empowered the Department to act as conciliators, and as opponents in preferential charges. Again, in the Railway Servants' Hours Act of 1893, the Department was specially enjoined to act as conciliators if necessary, and also as opponents to the companies on behalf of the railway servants. He was sure that Parliament never granted to the railway companies this absolute monopoly in respect of the trade of the country in order to crush out English enterprise and give the whole benefit to the foreigner.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said the subject was of more importance than perhaps the majority of hon. Members imagined. Preferential rates amounted to a bounty for the foreign exporter. As a member of the Select Committee on Railway Rates and Charges, he attempted to bring the question forward; but the evidence was difficult to obtain from those brought forward as witnesses. The President of the Board of Trade rushed a Bill through which did not adequately protect the native producer, and he trusted that the subject would receive the attention it deserved.

Mr. A. F. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) called the attention of the President of the Board of Agriculture to the heavy bounties given, not only in foreign countries but in the colonies, on farm produce sent to this country. Could nothing be done to mitigate the hardships of the English farmer's lot, not only on account of the preferential railway rates, but also on account of the heavy bounties on the produce sent here? The Canadian Government, in order to stimulate the export of butter, had made temporary advances equivalent to 20 cents in the £1, and they had also provided cool storage chambers for the butter. Victoria had sent 20,000,000lbs. of butter to England between July 25 of last year and February 16 of this year. He asked whether the Railway Companies could not be asked to give English farmers cheap carriage for their produce to the towns—say, at the same price as the foreign butter and eggs were carried. He thought the railway companies might give preferential rates for butter and eggs. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give some assurance that the matter had not escaped his attention, and that, if possible, something would be done in the interests of the farmer.

Mr. BRYCE said this was a matter which was not within the discretion of the Board of Trade, but was one proper for determination by the Railway Commission. The hon. Member was, no doubt, aware that there had been an important case, in regard to this matter argued in the last few days before the Railway Commissioners, and a decision given. So far from the Board of Trade having jurisdiction over the Railway Commissioners, they were absolutely powerless, and could bring no force whatever to bear upon the Railway Commission to induce them to lower these ratings. If hon. Members wished the railway companies to be dealt with they should go before the Railway Commission.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) rose in his place, and claimed to move "That the Question be now put:"—

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," put accordingly, and agreed to.

## ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

On the Order for Third Reading,

MR. R. W. HANBURY (Preston) called attention to the distinction drawn between the natives of India and the white men, serving in the Indian Army, in regard to the punishment of flogging, to which the former were liable. These punishments were not only applicable to the natives of India when serving in India, but also even when they came to this country, or served side by side with our troops in Egypt or elsewhere. He was anxious to do away once and for ever with this most invidious distinction. For the law which thus exempted the white man from the punishment of flogging, while it reserved it for the natives, the Government of India were not responsible; it was the deliberate act of the House in passing this Act which they were not allowed to amend.

Bill read 3°.

## OUTDOOR-RELIEF (IRELAND) BILL

On the Order for Second Reading,

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) called attention to the different treatment meted out to England and Ireland as illustrated by this Bill. The Bill was one to extend out-door relief and to give great facilities for relieving distress in Ireland, when at the present moment they had a Committee upstairs considering the relief of distress in England. A large sum of money had been voted for distress in Ireland quite lately on the Supplementary Estimates, and now this Bill was also brought in, while nothing was being done at the same time for England. There was no question but that in England there was as much distress as in Ireland. The question of outdoor relief was a most important one, and, as an English and a London Member, representing a district where there was a great deal of poverty, he thought this different treatment of the two countries was most unfair.

MR. J. ROSS (Londonderry) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he considered the third clause an essential part of the Bill, and he put the same question in regard to the first clause?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said the Bill was the mere counterpart of the Bill brought in in 1881 by the right hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet, and of that brought in by the right hon. Member for East Manchester in 1890. The hon. Member had asked him to withdraw that clause which relieved from electoral disability those who were unhappy enough to require relief, but the same reasons which had actuated right hon. Gentlemen on the front Opposition Bench in bringing forward similar Bills in previous years actuated him in bringing forward the present measure, and he hoped under the circumstances the Bill would be allowed to pass the second reading, as it would impose no charge whatever on the British taxpayer, but would simply allow boards of guardians in Ireland to do certain things, for which, if they did them wrongfully or wastefully, they would have to suffer themselves.

MR. ROSS said the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing about the first clause, which gave an unlimited power to the guardians which had never been proposed in previous Bills.

MR. J. MORLEY said, the provisions of the Bill were identical with those of previous Bills, and it was his intention to adhere to the Bill in its present form.

MR. F. G. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said, that as the right hon. Gentleman had announced his intention of adhering to the third clause, he must object to the further progress of the measure.

Debate accordingly adjourned till Monday.

### TRAMWAYS (IRELAND)—No. 2—BILL.

Bill read 2°.

### THE ROYAL PATRIOTIC FUND.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merioneth) moved that the following be the members of the Select Committee on the Royal Patriotic Fund:—Mr. T. Bayley, Captain Bethell, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Timothy Healy, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Luttrell, Sir H. Maxwell, Mr. Mowbray, Colonel Murray, Captain Norton, Mr. Ramsay, Lord E. Talbot, and Mr. Woodall.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. J. MORLEY gave notice, on behalf of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that on Monday he would move the suspension of the 12 o'clock rule.

Sitting suspended at Seven o'clock.

## EVENING SITTING.

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### LOCAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLIES.

On the Motion to go into Committee of Supply.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) rose to call attention to the desirability of establishing Local Legislative Assemblies; and to move the following Amendment:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, in order to give speedier and fuller effect to the special desires aad wants of the respective Nationalities constituting the United Kingdom, and with a view to increase the efficiency of the Imperial Parliament to deal with Imperial affairs, it is desirable to devolve upon Legislatures in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England respectively the management and control of their domestic affairs."

The hon. Member said it would be admitted by the opponents of the Amendment as well as its friends that it raised an issue of considerable importance, and that its acceptance by the House would not fail to mark a stage in the general progress of the Home Rule movement. He asked the House to affirm two separate and distinct proposals, first that local—and by local he meant national—opinion should as far as possible govern and determine the settlement of purely domestic affairs, secondly that, in order to achieve that purpose legislatures, subordinate to the Imperial Parliament, ought to be established in the four divisions of the United Kingdom. To use a phrase which was now recognised the Amendment was in favour of "Home Rule all round." It had, of course, been necessary to include Ireland in its scope. He assured his hon. Friends from Ireland that if he had thought that the inclusion of Ireland was calculated even in the smallest degree to injure, retard, or postpone by a single day or hour the realisation of their hopes he should have hesitated before he undertook the responsibility of including it. He took a very different view. The Chief Secretary the other day in that House said:—

> "The settlement of the Irish question was the primary policy of the present Liberal administration."

There was no Member on the Liberal side of the House who would not heartily agree, or who doubted what the opinion of the Liberal Party at large was on the subject. It would be presumption on his part to offer any argument on behalf of autonomy in Ireland. That House had already affirmed the principle of self-government for Ireland. It had done more. It had passed a Bill embodying that principle. That Bill had not become law, but they must read history through very green spectacles who thought that a measure which had received the support of the majority of the electors and was at this moment the foremost plank in the platform of a Liberal administration would be prevented from becoming law very soon. The passage of the Bill for Home Rule for Ireland raised the question of the general devolution from the region of speculative theory to that of practical politics. The retention of 80 Irish Members in this House after the establishment of a separate Parliament for Ireland was only part of a general settlement in which the other parts of the

Kingdom would ultimately share. It was an expedient of political necessity rather than the application of sound political principle. But it forced the question of general devolution to a point which no Ministry in favour of Home Rule could fail to recognise. One of the most common objections which had been made in England to the granting of self-government to Ireland had been that Ireland was going to be specially treated, and that the Irish people would gain advantages that the people of other parts of the United Kingdom would not enjoy. If they could make it clearer than they had hitherto done, that after the Irish question was settled and an Irish Parliament established Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen would have the same advantages given them, he believed the average Englishman would be inclined to give more support to the Home Rule movement than he gave at the present time. If it could be made clear and beyond dispute that after the settlement of the Irish question on satisfactory lines the other parts of the United Kingdom would benefit, the sting would, to a great extent, be taken out of the Opposition with regard to Ulster. There was some doubt whether the right hon. Member for Midlothian treated the question of self-government for Ireland as an isolated one or part of a general settlement of devolution. The right hon. Gentleman, addressing a Scottish audience, said :—

> "If the doctrines of Home Rule are to be established in Ireland, I protest, on your behalf, that you will be just as well entitled to it in Scotland, and, moreover, I protest on behalf of Wales that it will be entitled to Home Rule also."

He passed now to the Scotch view of the Amendment and the Scotch case as far as the proposal was concerned. He admitted at once, as he admitted last year when he had the privilege of carrying a Resolution in the House in favour of a domestic legislature for Scotland, that there was not in Scotland that same passionate feeling with regard to Home Rule which existed in Ireland. But the Scotch were a long-suffering and patient people, and although the question was ripe enough last year to justify a majority of Members from Scotland in voting for it, yet the proposal of Home Rule for Ireland had, if he might use the phrase, "forced the pace" as far as Scotland was concerned. He would sum up the Scotch case practically in two sentences. The Scotch people said it was utterly impossible, under the present condition of things, to obtain the legislation for Scotland desired by the Scotch people ; secondly, the legislation which they were able to secure was not in accordance with the desire of the majority of the Scotch Representatives. Take the question of the control of the drink traffic. Public opinion in Scotland, with regard to that, was much more advanced than throughout England or even Wales. In the last fifteen or twenty years the people of Scotland had made up their minds on the policy of Local Government, and they had returned a majority of Members in favour of it. They remembered some some ten or twelve Bills of importance that had never reached a Second Reading. It was said that the question of the continued Establishment of the Church of Scotland ought to be settled in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the people of Scotland, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite took the same view, for they had introduced a Bill embodying the principle that the Scottish Church question ought to be settled by the Scottish people. The hon. Member for the Stewartry took that view, and therefore he hoped to have the benefit of that Member's support. If the Scottish people ought to settle that question, the only way in which they could be enabled to do it was by establishing a local Legislature. The views of the Secretary for Scotland could not be supreme in an Imperial Parliament containing a majority of English, Scotch, and Welsh Members. It might, perhaps, be said that the case of Scotland was not so strong as it was a year ago, because the Parish Councils Bill had been passed, and therefore Scotland ought to be satisfied. The first remark to be made upon that was that it was a non-contentious Bill, and it would have been utterly impossible, if it had been a contentious Bill, to have got it read a second time and referred to a Grand Committee. Let it be remembered what difficulty there was in obtaining the appointment of the Grand Committee. On five different occasions the question was discussed at the

House, and the result was seen this year in the fact that, notwithstanding the trouble paid to the working of that Committee by the right hon. Member for Bodmin in Glasgow, the Government was afraid to propose that a Scotch Grand Committee should sit this Session. So that, again, there was no better prospect for Scotch Legislation than there had been in previous Sessions. Last year the House gave a Second Reading to a very innocent Bill known as the Fatal Accidents Inquiry Bill for Scotland. That Bill dealt with a very small question, simply providing that in cases of fatal injury to persons in the course of their employment special inquiry should be made to ascertain the cause. The Bill was considered by the Grand Committee on Law, and came back to this House. Then there was placed on the Paper an Amendment, which, although it was important, did not challenge the vital principle of the Bill; but because two hours could not be obtained to discuss that Amendment, a Bill, accepted by both sides of the House, as far as Scotland was concerned, was lost last Session; and it did not seem to have a much better prospect of being passed this Session. The fate of that Bill illustrated the position of Scotch Legislation generally. This Session, he doubted whether Scotch Members had had the opportunity of giving more than one purely Scottish vote; they had been dividing solely on Imperial affairs. There were deputations almost every day to the Secretary for Scotland trying to get something done for Scotland; but to all appearance at the end of the Session the result would be very small indeed. There was high authority for the view that, if there was to be a general devolution of business, Wales should come up for separate treatment. Speaking in Wales Lord Salisbury said :—

> "If ever there was a people who were a separate nationality, it is the Welsh."

Therefore it would be a subject of legitimate complaint on the part of Lord Salisbury and his two Welsh supporters in the House if he made an invidious distinction in the case of Wales. As to the English view of the matter, Home Rule for England probably could not come into force immediately, and England would have to be left for final treatment. What was to be the position of the English Members with regard to this Amendment? What was the complaint made a few weeks ago by Lord Salisbury at Edinburgh with regard to the English position. He complained that purely English and domestic affairs were settled by voters from the south and west of Ireland against the wishes of English Members. If that was the view of English Members, surely they would support this Amendment and take advantage of the opportunity he gave them to throw off the Irish yoke. Let any English Member consider the position of England upon any great question which affected England alone, such, for instance, as the English Church. It was possible that in the House the Disestablishment of the English Church might be carried with the aid of the votes of Scotch, Irish, and Welsh Members; therefore Churchmen who were anxious that English feeling should dominate on this question ought to support him. Most important of all was the Imperial view of this Amendment. There could be no doubt that the House was unable properly to discharge all the work required of it. No matter how many hours they might sit, nor how much time was taken by the Government, there was always a large number of Bills of great importance which never got discussed at all. Consider the personal position of Members themselves. Members of Parliament ought not to have to work 12 to 14 hours a day; their constituents did not wish them to do it; yet it had to be done two or three times a week by Members who were taking their proper share of the work of Private Bill Legislation. The Leader of the Opposition, when he was Secretary for Scotland, said that the present system of Private Bill Legislation by Committees was utterly absurd, expensive, and antiquated. That was in 1886; and nothing had been done since to provide a remedy. A Bill was introduced by the late Conservative Government; but it dealt only with the Private Bill Legislation of Scotland, and it did not satisfy the majority of Scotch Representatives. Another point was, the want of time in this House for the discussion of purely Imperial affairs. Their first duty was the consideration of Supply; and how was it dealt with now? The Government got Votes on Account, and Supply was put off to the end of the Session. When the day for Adjournment or Prorogation was fixed, a Member who raised discussion in Committee was deemed a bore if he risked the prolongation of the Session. The result was, that there was no proper consideration of the Votes, that questions were not raised that ought to be raised, and that Committee of Supply was gradually becoming a mockery and a farce. Last year, at the end of the Session, Votes were passed as fast as the Deputy Chairman could read them, and twenty to thirty millions were voted in as many minutes without a word being said. Then, again, there was the great question of India How much time was given to that? He ventured to say that not a dozen Members had given any attention at all to the subject. Therefore he said that the Imperial House of Commons ought to consist of men who devoted their attention to Indian, Colonial and Imperial affairs, and their time ought not to be occupied with purely local affairs. He might be asked as to his plan. He was an old enough Parliamentary hand not to go into details with regard to any plan, but there were two considerations which he thought ought to govern the general settlement of the question. The first was that the settlement which would be finally acceptable to the majority of the British people was a settlement which should as far as possible not disturb the present constitution of the House; and, secondly, the consideration might be kept in view that the House and local legislatures ought to meet at different periods of the year, as far as that could be arranged. Now, he saw an amendment on the paper in the name of the hon. Member for Somersetshire, but the hon. Gentleman was not in his place to move it. While it came from Somersetshire it appeared to have been manufactured in Birmingham, and he was sorry the hon. Gentleman had not come forward to move it, because had he been present he would have suggested to him that he ought to have lived in the time of William the Conqueror, when his views would have been more likely to be accepted. We might then have suggested that Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, Sussex and Wessex, and even Colney Hatch should have separate legislatures. He was sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not in his place, because he should have liked to hear his views on this matter. Still, he would be perfectly satisfied if the position of the Government was stated by the Secretary for Scotland. There was no doubt what the position of the Government ought to be. The Prime Minister said at Cardiff:—

> "The more I see of our political system the more I am convinced of this, that in a large measure of devolution, subject to Imperial control, lies the secret of the future working of an Empire. Daily also, in my opinion, that devolution comes nearer and nearer. . . . The Liberal Party, in my opinion, will never find its full strength until it has enlisted all the power and sympathy and freedom which it would gain in every part of the United Kingdom by the systematised devolution of local business to the localities themselves."

In view of that statement there could be no doubt as to what the position of the Government ought to be on this question. At any rate he hoped the Government would let the House have their views clearly before it on this particular amendment. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite got into office in 1886 by opposition to the Home Rule policy, and for the same reason they lost office in 1892. They thought, no doubt, that opposition to Home Rule was popular in the country, and that they were going to sweep the country on that question. If the Unionist Alliance could be made to last out the General Election—and he was quite sure it would not last long—they hoped to obtain a sufficient majority in the House hostile to the policy of Home Rule. *The Times* newspaper, which was not influenced by Radical considerations, gave them a majority of 30. Assuming that they were going to obtain a majority at the next election, did they think that was going to settle the Home Rule question? Did they think, even if they had a majority of 50, that the Home Rule question was going to die out like the flicker of a candle? The Home Rule question would remain to be dealt with no matter what Government was in power, until this question of devolution, particularly so far as Ireland was concerned, was dealt with on some such lines as he had suggested in the Amendment before the House. He begged to move.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE (Carnarvon) in seconding the resolution, thought he ought first to make it clear what they did not want. As far as Wales was concerned they did not want to set up a separate and independent Republic. They did not want an army and navy. They simply wanted what was foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham when he said :—

> "But beyond and above a purely municipal organisation of this kind, I believe that a larger arrangement will be found safe and desirable, under which, subject to the concurrent and supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament, the various portions of the United Kingdom shall be enabled to exercise a greater influence over local administration and over legislation for their special needs and requirements. Such an arrangement, involving a delegation, but not a surrender, of power, and in which the subjects referred to local assemblies would be strictly defined, would probably be sufficient to satisfy the national aspirations of Scotland and Wales."

He believed six years had elapsed since these words were spoken, and Parliamentary conditions, if they had changed at all, had changed in the direction of strengthening the arguments for such a proposition rather than of weakening them. His hon. Friend had pointed out one strong argument in favour of Home Rule all round, when he referred to the congested state of public business in the House. That was probably the inevitable result of the policy adopted in recent years by both Parties in social and economic questions. Formerly both parties deprecated any interference with trade and commerce, and were prepared to leave questions dealing with the welfare of the people to the working of economic causes. Now that doctrine had been dismissed, and both Parties vied with each other in making suggestions for interfering with trade and commerce, for dealing with the lives and comfort of the people, and even for curtailing the hours of labour. In the course of the present Session suggestions had come from the other side of the House for employing people who were unable to find employment for themselves. With these altered conditions it was absolutely impossible for the House to attend properly to all its duties, and at the same time to deal with the separate demands of each nationality. If anyone doubted that he had only to contrast the Ministerial Programmes as set forth in the Queen's Speech for the last ten years with the Ministerial performances at the end of a Session. The present Sessions started with a programme which would probably take two or three Session to work out, and a motion had already been carried in favour of legislation on the question of German brushes, and three or four commissions ranging over the whole area of our commercial and industrial system, the recommendations of which would probably be of a most sweeping character, and would all have to be embodied in legislation; and Friday after Friday they were adding to the number of urgent recommendations to the Government to legislate on various topics. Even if the Government were willing to carry out the recommendations made in the course of the present Session, it would take twenty years to do so. Was it possible, then, that with the present system Parliament could adequately dispose of all these demands in its time? He thought they ought to find some remedy. It was also a deplorable fact that such measures as were got through the House of Commons were often incomplete and imperfect. That was the result of the present system. Ministers overburdened with the care of all kinds of local matters had not sufficient time in which to think out the great measures to be submitted to Parliament. In 1888, when the Local Government Bill was presented, the Unionist Government recognized that they ought to deal with the subject of district councils, with the liquor question, and with other matters; but these subjects were not dealt with in the Bill, because there was not enough time for their consideration. Five or six years elapsed, and the new President of the Local Government Board introduced another incomplete Bill, the excuse being the same—that the time at the disposal of the House was limited. These were illustrations of the difficulty in the way of dealing comprehensively with important subjects. Then, owing to the pressure of time, the only persons who proposed amendments to a measure were its opponents, who desired to stifle it. The men who approved it, and who had studied the question with which it dealt, did not move amendments, although they saw remedial defects in the Bill, because they knew that if they moved amendments they might endanger its passing. The Government, in order to buy off opposition and save time, were often compelled to make concessions which weakened a Bill. The less time a Government had at its disposal the greater was the discussion of its projects, but when it was manifest that the Government could get through its work, whatever might be the amount of time consumed by the Opposition, discussion was at once wonderfully curtailed. That was very curious, and was one of the absurd results of the present absurd system. He was surprised that the English people, who had the reputation of being the best business people in the world, could uphold it. Two-thirds of the time of that House was taken up by questions which affected separate and distinct parts of the kingdom. In 1880, for example, about half the time of Parliament was devoted to Irish questions. In 1886 the best part of the first Session was spent in the discussion of the Irish Coercion Bill; then there were two or three Sessions devoted to an Irish Land Bill, and subsequently the best part of one or two Sessions was spent in an attempt to force poor little Wales to pay tithes. The result was the great Unionist Parliament found no time at all for English business. Even in the present Parliament the same state of things had prevailed, and it would prevail as long as the present system was allowed to continue. The remedy was to confer upon each nationality in the kingdom a Parliament of its own for the discussion of questions affecting it exclusively. In England there was hardly any demand for anything in the nature of land reform, but in Wales the tenant farmers unanimously demanded the establishment of a land court, compensation for improvements, and fixing of tenure. Did not the existence of that demand and the demand for the Disestablishment of the Church show that Wales had special grievances and was entitled to special treatment? There was also a special demand for temperance legislation in Wales, and the Principality had also education questions of its own. One regrettable result of the present system was that before a small nationality in the kingdom could get its grievances attended to it had to resort to something in the nature of lawlessness. Nearly all the legislation of the last ten years for the benefit of the Celtic nationalities had been the result of some kind of insubordination. Instances of this were afforded by the Scotch Crofters' Bill, the Irish Arrears Bill of 1887, and the settlement of the tithe agitation in Wales. No one who favoured law and order could reasonably desire the continuance of a system which forced every small nationality in the country to infringe the law when it wished attention to be paid to its grievances. He also supported the principle of Home Rule all round, because he believed that it would foster the spirit of local patriotism. Hon. Members opposite were rather too fond of treating that idea with contempt. He noticed that our military men had discovered its value long ago. In the army there were Welsh troops, Scotch troops, Irish troops. Why? Because our men of action knew that there was nothing that brought out the best and most soldier-like qualities of their men like an appeal to their enthusiasm for the honour and the fame of their country. What was true of warfare against foreign foes was equally true in the war which was being waged against social evils. It was one way to stir up men to fight against those evils, which were much more dangerous than any foreign foe.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the speeches in which this Resolution had been commended to the consideration of the House had, no doubt, been interesting and valuable up to a certain point; but he trusted the hon. Gentlemen who proposed and seconded the Resolution would forgive him if he said that, considering the strength of the case which they ought to have been able to present in support of the Resolution, their speeches were scarcely equal to the magnitude of the subject. The subject was one of enormous importance. The proposal amounted to nothing short of the entire revolution of the present Constitution of this kingdom. The subject of Federalism was one that at every stage of the world's history had commanded the attention of political philosophers, and he was willing to admit that there were circumstances in the development of the Constitution of this country and in the growth of popular liberties in this country which would induce one to turn one's eyes towards Federalism as a solution of many of the grave problem of the day. No doubt this discussion must in the main be considered merely as an academic discussion of a theoretical principle, and if he were quite sure that the adoption of the Resolution by the Government of the day and by the House would have any appreciable bearing upon the position of the question of the National Government of Ireland, he would have very little hesitation in expressing in very strong and decided terms the views which he entertained about the abstract merits of Federalism. He had always believed that Federalism was—in the words of the historian of Federalism, Mr. Freeman—a true solvent of the difficulties of those countries which had a certain community of history, or origin, or of interest sufficient to enable them to work together up to a certain point, but which had not that complete community, or rather identity, which would enable them to be fused into one nation. But in considering this Resolution he was bound to ask himself: Was it true that this was a mere academic discussion of an abstract theory, with no actuality behind it whatever? So far as England was concerned, there was at the present moment no demand whatever for a federal arrangement. No complaint had been made that the particular interests of England had been neglected by this Parliament. As to Scotland, he listened with the greatest attention to the speech of the Mover of the Resolution. He said he was coming to the Scotch portion of the case, but he dealt very lightly with that part of the case. It might therefore be fairly gathered that while there was no doubt a feeling in Scotland in favour of committing to the management of Scotchmen purely Scotch affairs, even the hon. Member would not stand up in the House and say that the demand for Scotch Home Rule was an urgent and pressing question at this moment? It was evident from the speech of the hon. Member that both as to England and Scotland this was the merest academic discussion of an abstract theory. With regard to Wales, he thought the same observation was true. The fact was, that Welsh public opinion was concentrated not on the effort to obtain a local Parliament for Wales, but on the passing of Welsh Disestablishment and other Welsh reforms through the present constituted Parliament. So far as the three countries were concerned, therefore, the Debate had no practical reality whatever. If he were able to say the same in regard to Ireland he would be found voting heartily in support of the Resolution. But so far as Ireland was concerned, this was not merely a question of abstract theory. It was a matter of very urgent reality, and it was impossible to discuss the question of the concession of autonomy for Ireland on an abstract Resolution of this kind without taking into account the effect the passing of that Resolution must have upon the prospect of a cause which they hoped, and which the more sanguine of them believed, was approaching rapidly to a settlement. He distrusted and disliked the Resolution from the Irish point of view, notwithstanding the smooth words of the hon. Gentleman who proposed it. The hon. Gentleman assured the House that he desired that the case of Ireland should be treated separately and first. Why did he not put it into his Resolution?

Mr. DALZIEL: I am prepared to accept the addition.

Mr. J. REDMOND said it was not in his power to move as an Amendment that those words be added. The Resolution placed the case of Ireland for Home Rule on precisely the same level as the cases of England, Scotland, and Wales. But the case of Ireland was an entirely exceptional case. It was admitted by the entire Liberal Party a few years ago that Home Rule for Ireland was alone and beyond and before every other question — not merely every domestic question, but every question of great Constitutional reform affecting every portion of the Empire. It was true that, for the time being, the question of Home Rule for Ireland had disappeared. If the question were at all apparent to the eye, it appeared in a state of trance, to which it had been reduced by the present leaders of the Liberal Party—a state of trance from which, according to the Prime Minister it was not to be awakened until, forsooth! the House of Lords was abolished; and if the resolution were carried the question of Home Rule for Ireland would remain in that state of trance, not only until the Upper Chamber was abolished, but until public opinion in England, Scotland, and Wales had become ripe for the creation of local assemblies in those countries, which meant, in other words, until the people of those countries had made up their minds to pull the present Constitution of the kingdom absolutely to pieces. But Ireland could not wait for Home Rule until those things were accomplished. To the people of Ireland it was the most urgent and pressing and vital of questions—a question of life and death; and in his judgment, at any rate, the policy of the Nationalist representatives ought to be to keep Home Rule in the front of all other public questions in this kingdom. The hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Resolution talked much about the devolution of local affairs to local assemblies and of the difficulty of getting private Bills through the Imperial Parliament. But Home Rule meant more than that. It meant the restoration to Ireland of that national Government of which she was robbed by force and fraud—a restoration which the people of Ireland demanded not only as an urgent and pressing necessity for their country, but also upon the higher and broader ground of national and historical right. The demand for autonomy in Ireland had taken the shape of a demand for repeal until the Home Rule Conference which was held in Dublin in 1873, when the late Isaac Butt, whose memory was still honoured in the House of Commons, induced, for the first time, a representative assembly of Irishmen to accept the proposal of a federal union with England as the national demand. In asking the Home Rule Conference of that year to accept the federal demand instead of repeal, Mr. Butt exhaustively dealt with the question of Home Rule, and quoted a letter written in 1844 by Mr. (now Sir) Charles Gavan Duffy, who wrote that federalism, as it was intended by some of the soundest men in the party who supported it, meant Local Parliaments for the three divisions of the Empire and an Imperial one in common.

> "If this principle be insisted upon," wrote Mr. Duffy, "federalism is impracticable; it implies a reorganization of the British Constitution, and, apart from other objections to it, raises a new and tremendous difficulty."

Commenting upon the letter, Mr. Butt agreed that any plan of federal union which involved the breaking up of the arrangement of the Constitution was impracticable, and said they must not come forward with a proposal to pull all existing things to pieces.

> "It is vain," he said, "to expect that the English people will consent to pull the fabric of Government to pieces for the sake of giving us Home Rule or in order to construct fantastical baby houses. . . . The plan we propose is open to no such objection, and could be carried out with no essential alteration in the present machinery of Imperial Government."

For his part, although he had no hesitation in saying he believed in the principle of federalism and that in the principle of federalism all these international difficulties would eventually find solution, at the same time he was convinced it would be a grievous injury to the cause of Home Rule for Ireland if it were now complicated by coupling with it the demand for the creation of local assemblies for England, Scotland, and Wales. Further, he believed that in granting Home Rule to Ireland, in the first instance, care ought to be taken that Home Rule should be conceded to Ireland in such a shape and form it would be possible to fit in afterwards that with a complete system of federalism for all these islands. That was true of the Home Rule Bill of 1893. The Mover of the Resolution spoke of the proposal in that Home Rule Bill to retain the Irish Members in this House, and he truly said that such retention could only be sustained on the theory that at some time in the future a complete system of federalism would be established for all these countries; because, during the interval between the granting of Home Rule to Ireland and the completion of a system of federalism, the presence of the Irish Members in this House on English, Scotch, and Welsh affairs, when Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Welshmen had no control over Irish affairs, would be an anomaly. But that, he submitted, was no reason why the concession of Home Rule to Ireland should be postponed until they could make their system symmetrical. The Irish Members never demanded they should be retained in this House, they desired the control of their own affairs in their local Legislature, believing they would be called back to this Parliament when the character and the future of the Parliament would be changed, and when in its place was created an Imperial Assembly in which all portions of the Empire should be represented. Anything which tended to strengthen the idea that Home Rule could wait either for Welsh Disestablishment, Local Veto, or any other British domestic concern on the one hand, or for great constitutional changes, such as the abolition of the House of Lords or the concession of federalism to various parts of the United Kingdom, on the other hand, he regarded as absolutely fatal to the prospects of the Irish cause. He objected in the strongest possible way to the wording of the Resolution which placed Home Rule, which was urgent and pressing, in the same category as the cause of federalism in Great Britain, which could not be regarded at this moment as within the range of practical politics. If it were possible he would have liked to have moved after the words "it is desirable" in the Resolution to insert—

"that, after a national Parliament shall be established in Ireland, to devolve upon Legislatures in Scotland, Wales, and England the management of their own affairs."

Had the Resolution contained those words it might possibly have been within his power to support it, but as it stood he could not take the responsibility of voting in its favour.

Mr. R. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange) remarked that the hon. Member for Waterford had attributed to the supporters of this Resolution a desire to postpone Home Rule for Ireland. He thought if the Liberal Party in that House were to treat Ireland and the Members from Ireland with as little sympathy and consideration in their difficulties as some of the Irish Members seemed disposed to concede to them, then the prospect of Home Rule would be in a very poor way. He, for one, most distinctly disclaimed, in giving his support to the Resolution, any desire whatever to postpone or retard the passing of a measure of Home Rule for Ireland, and he thought it was a little hard that the hon. Member for Waterford should refuse to them what he had pointed out in their case would merely be the result of an academic discussion, while he himself, or rather those he represented, had had the advantage of the passing by that House of a Home Rule measure. The hon. Member talked about some supposed desire on the part of the Liberals to minimise and reduce the degree of self-government which should be conceded to the Irish people, and he asked them what their views on Home Rule were. He would ask the hon. Member to read the Home Rule Bill which was passed by the House of Commons. To every word of that Bill he and every one on that side of the House who supported it still adhered. It seemed to have been rather understood that this question was a question primarily affecting Scotland and Wales. He confessed he did not take that view of it, because it had always seemed to him that if there was any member of the partnership to whom Home Rule was rapidly becoming a necessity it was England herself. It was said that England was represented by a majority of Unionist Members, and consequently if they dissociated England from her allies they would get possibly a permanently Tory majority in this country. He did not think so. He thought the result of an election, where the social issues placed before our countrymen were dissociated from certain Imperial questions, from which at present they could not so dissociate them, would be startling to hon. Members opposite. But even if that were the result he should not complain, because his notion of Liberalism was not Liberalism by coercion. He was satisfied they never could do any good in the interests of progress by forcing on any national reforms which the people were not ready for and did not want. From the social point of view a delegation of the matters of each nationality would result in great benefit to the country at large. In the first place, he could not imagine anything which would afford greater facilities for social progress than having England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales all separately managing their social matters for themselves. They would not all go in the same direction. One would attempt one reform and another a different one;

and there would be the great advantage of comparing differences. The mistakes of one would save the others from similar mistakes. There would, in short, be four times the chance of real social progress if they had these four independent movements along parallel lines going on at the same time. An even more important consideration was the effect which such a devolution would have on the Imperial Parliament. It would eliminate from the Imperial Parliament that provincialism which must be present so long as it had at times to descend to the details of local government. It would immensely strengthen our position with regard to our relations with foreign countries. At present the power of the Little England party was altogether incommensurate with the public support it had behind it; yet there were times when, owing to social and domestic questions, even such a small party might have a serious effect in regard to our foreign relations. There was very little doubt that what one heard at the present time on that question tended to lead foreign nations to suppose that England was always squeezable, and that they had only to squeeze hard enough to get what they wanted. He certainly thought the Imperial Parliament, discharged from the necessary domestic differences of party warfare about what were really local affairs, would be in a much better position to deal with the interests of the Empire at large than Parliament could at the present time. There was only one other consideration, and that was this, that such an arrangement would undoubtedly lend itself to what he feared was quite impracticable under present conditions, and that was the presence of representatives from all parts of the Empire in a common Imperial Parliament. Great as had been the history of this Imperial Parliament, all Englishmen could only look forward with pride and hope to an assembly in which they had representatives from every part of the Empire. At the present stage it was wasting time to allege that the difficulties were insuperable. Until they first settled the question of whether they wanted this change or not, it was useless to attempt to discuss how they were to get it, and they were not in a position to be able to say they could not get it at all.

MR. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he had not any intention of intervening in the Debate, but, after the speech of the hon. Member for Waterford, he felt it incumbent upon him to explain, however briefly, the reasons why he should heartily support the Motion. The hon. Member for Waterford had said he could support no Motion which seemed to tend to the postponement of Home Rule for Ireland. Nor could he, nor could any one of the Party with whom he worked, if it had any such tendency, but he did not believe that this Motion, had any such tendency. The hon. Member said he objected to anything which bore the appearance of postponing Home Rule, whether it was for this Motion, or for Welsh Disestablishment, or for any other measure. He begged to tell the hon. Member that his speech was not that of a practical politician. He held that no man had any right to come to the House and, pretending to represent the interests of the Irish people, say he was prepared to take up such a position towards the allies who had stood faithfully by them during many long years of struggle, and say the Irish Members would accept their assistance and loyal support and give them nothing in return. That was the policy of political idiocy, and those who advocated it should betake themselves to the hillsides of Ireland, and not sit upon the Benches of the House of Commons. If anything was to be won for Ireland it must be on the principle of voting against those who were the enemies of Ireland, and assisting those who were friends of that country. Was there any man in that House who supposed that the people of Ireland were so stupid, or so incapable of understanding the elements of politics, as to believe that they would be serving the interests of Ireland or advancing the hour of victory for Home Rule by telling their Welsh allies, after 15 years of faithful alliance and friendly co-operation, that they would not give a vote for Welsh Disestablishment this year? They tried that issue out in Ireland last year, and the mandate they received from their constituents was to support the Welsh people in their efforts to secure Welsh Disestablishment. On the same principle they ought to support that Resolution that night, and, as Irish

Nationalists, they would support it. The Mover and Seconder of the Resolution recognised that the case of Ireland had priority and was a special case. They did not attempt to minimise or curtail the demands of Ireland, or even to say that the demands of Ireland were exactly the same as those of Scotland or Wales. They admitted that the demands of those two countries were not so urgent as those of Ireland, and he asked whether, that being so, it would be reasonable or just on the part of honest men if they were to refuse to support the demands of their friends in Scotland and Wales. He spoke, he was sure, the sentiments of nine-tenths of the people of Ireland when he said they would be condemned to-morrow if they did not support the reasonable and just demands which had been put forward. He looked at this Resolution from the point of view largely, though not entirely, of the interests of Ireland, and he thought they were bound, by every consideration of expediency, and of their desire to push forward the cause of Home Rule, to show to their allies that so long as they were true to them the Irish Members would be true to them, and as they gave up the whole of one Session to pass Home Rule for Ireland and were going to give up a considerable part of this Session to pass a Bill in which the fate and fortunes of the people of Ireland were closely bound up, they would give them a fair and reasonable return for their kind offices to Ireland. He looked at it also from a wider point of view. He believed that the Irish Question in this country had since 1886, the year that marked an epoch in the history of Ireland—when an English Minister for the first time declared himself as the champion of Irish grievances, and when the great majority of the Radicals and Liberals of this country for the first time took up the case of Irish grievances—entered into a different phase. He believed that the Irish Members would be utterly unworthy if they did not modify their former attitude in accordance with the modified circumstances in which they were placed. The Irish Party were no longer isolated in this country. They were no longer pariahs and outcasts. They had, he believed, a firm and deep-seated hold on the rank and file, apart from the leaders, of the Liberal Party; they possessed, he believed, a hold on the people of this country, and false would they be if they cast away that great hold. The Irish Party recognised the great value of that position, and had modified their action accordingly. He trusted that, in the future, while they would never lower the flag of the Irish cause, which it was their first duty to maintain and push forward, or allow it to be postponed by one hour longer than the absolute necessities of the case required, they would also show that they felt for the wants and rights of the people of this country; and so long as the democracy of Great Britain were true to the cause of Home Rule, so long would they find in Irish Nationalists true and honest sympathisers.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Buteshire) remarked that there was always an air of unreality about these Friday evening discussions. They seemed to be like "ploughing the sand." In the last Parliament, right hon. Gentlemen opposite were very fond of promulgating the theory that it was the duty of the Government promptly to follow up the passing of one of these Resolutions by bringing in a Bill to give effect to it. Notably in the case of payment of Members, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had altered the well-known words of Felix thus:—

> "Though I am very happy to hear you now, I will pay you at a more convenient season."

The subjects chosen for these Friday night discussions should not, in his opinion, be too far from the range of practical politics. In rising that night he had endeavoured to free himself from any feeling of that sort, and to treat this Motion with the gravity of the Mover and Seconder. But those speeches failed to deal with the topic upon which he most desired information. They did not say one single word as to what arrangements they proposed in relation to the Executive. After all, was not this the *crux* of the whole question? It was impossible to avoid one or two alternatives—either they must have a local Executive, practically independent of the Imperial Executive, or they must have an Executive independent of the Legislature. In the first alternative, they would enter again upon that long controversial debate which they had upon the Irish Home Rule Bill, which could never be better settled than in the words of the homely proverb—

> "If two men ride on a horse one of them must be in front."

If it had been shown that the vetoes proposed in the case of Ireland would have broken down just when they would be most wanted, what, he asked, would be the case when they were dealing with four Executives, representing, or not representing, the dominant political party at the time? If they took the other alternative they had to face the establishment of an Executive not dependent on the Legislature, and they would then be surrendering the distinguishing feature of the British Constitution, which more than anything else, had tended to the maintenance of personal freedom—a privilege which we, more than any other nation, had enjoyed. There were many examples in other countries where the divorce was complete. America was an instance at the present moment of a country where the Executive did not represent the majority of the Legislature. That would be an absolutely new system to establish in this country, and, as the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had truly said, it would be tearing up the British Constitution. There was one point which he did not think had been touched upon by the hon. Members who moved and seconded the Resolution, and it was the effect which the establishment of those separate Parliaments would have on the course of Legislation. After all, there was not nearly so much distinction between the legal system of the various parts of the three kingdoms as was sometimes thought. Even in regard to Scotland, were it not for two things—namely, some picturesque peculiarities in the Scotch marriage laws, and the fact that the English lawyer did not understand the Scotch legal jargon and forms—the legal systems of the two countries would be very nearly the same. The whole great commercial system was the same, and what men had been trying to do for many years past was to assimilate the laws of the two countries. But the effect of the Resolution was to reverse that process and to make the systems of law different. Then what was to be the prospect of the Imperial Parliament after those Local Legislatures had been established? Was the Imperial Parliament to be reduced to a dreary discussion on the Navy Estimates? An hon. Member opposite had spoken of the necessity there was for a better understanding and a better discussion of Indian and Colonial affairs in that House. Did he really think that if this Parliament discussed nothing but the Navy Estimates, and Indian and Colonial affairs, that it would retain its character as the Imperial and supreme Parliament? Men were interested in those things that concerned and affected them most. Let them take, as an illustration, the list of subjects referred to in the Home Rule Bill as applying to an Irish Parliament, and could they doubt for a moment that if the local Legislatures were continually discussing all the important questions that arose upon those subjects, while this Parliament engaged only in an occasional debate upon Indian finances and economy—could they doubt, under those circumstances, that the centre of interest and the supreme power would in time leave that Parliament and centre in the local Parliaments? It was impossible, then, to deal with more than the fringe of the subject, but he wished to point out to the House that the Resolution was an entirely different thing from the Home Rule policy of the Government, a fact that had been recognized by the hon. Member for Waterford. He was anxious to know, therefore, what would be the attitude of the Government towards the Resolution. Had they found out their present Irish policy was not a good playing card, and, if so, did they think that Home Rule all round was a better card? As to any demand for Home Rule, he did not believe there was much in Scotland, and probably the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool might take his place as the first English Home Ruler. But the important point was to know the course the Government intended to adopt on the present occasion. They did not want simple expressions of sympathy, and he confessed that he was astonished to hear the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs, after quoting from a speech of the Prime Minister during the Recess to justify his statement, that he could have no doubt as to what would be the attitude of the Government on the question. He would press upon the right hon. Gentleman opposite, if he was going to speak, that he should at least recognise the real meaning of the proposal, which was the tearing up of our present Constitution. It was something different from the Home Rule Bill, which no one thought or argued as if it proposed a federal system. If he did so, he might stir up the Government's present Irish policy, and the Government might even cease to ponder over the difficult question of the wording of that Resolution which they all expected to see some day. But if he contented himself with mere words of sympathy, which meant nothing, then upon this occasion they would have been wasting in idle words the idlest Friday evening of an unpractical Session.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, the Amendment of his hon. Friend raised a large question, but he did not think that was any objection in an abstract Resolution. When he was nearer the age of his hon. Friend he had raised in abstract Resolutions the largest legislative questions which had been carried in our generation—the Abolition of Purchase in the Army and the Extension of Household Suffrage—and he doubted whether the time could have been very much better employed. Those who raised large questions in abstract Resolutions, however, must not, and probably did not, expect the concurrence and support of the Government, as a Government, the first time that they were placed upon the Paper. Governments which had got a great deal of work in hand, and were not quite in their first youth, were generally rather slow in their corporate capacity in giving their adhesion to propositions which, if accepted, might bring down upon them very great and herculean labours. They had to be careful not to pledge themselves prematurely, and they had to be careful, also, not to abuse the great influence of the Government by bring pressure to influence and alter the genuine opinion of the House of Commons. The value of abstract Resolutions consisted in their being the measure and mirror of the real opinion of Parliament. It was impossible that questions of advantage to the country could ever ripen and come to maturity, or that dangerous proposals could ever be finally condemned by public opinion, unless Parliament freely expressed its opinion when these matters were brought before them. Unless on that bench and all through the House Members gave their votes according to to the light that was in them, they had better do away altogether with abstract Resolutions and give the whole time of the House to passing Bills, whether of private Members or of the Government.

One hon. Member had said that the discussion was unreal, and he was bound to say that the hon. Member did not, he thought, add very much to its reality. He thought, however, the House was very well satisfied with the Debate; he had very seldom heard the opinions of all quarters of the kingdom more adequately expressed. The hon. Mover told them the story of Scotland, and although he had told it before, he had done so this time with novelty; the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs was really admirable in his exposition of the Welsh case; the question of England was put by his hon. Friend the Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool in a manner which created sympathy and interest throughout the House; and the hon. Member for East Mayo, fighting with those who had fought with him shoulder to shoulder, and who would continue to fight with him in the national cause, if nobody else did, put the case of Ireland in a manner which perfectly satisfied, at any rate, hon. Members who sat upon that Bench. As far as Scotland was concerned, he supposed every Scotch Member present had voted for or against Home Rule for Scotland. The circumstances of last Session and this Session had not diminished the motives of hon. Members. Last Session English business and the Imperial business connected with finance filled the time of Parliament so completely that, but for a single circumstance, Scotland would have got nothing for herself at all, the circumstance being that her principal measure was sent to a Committee upon which all Scotch Members sat and had their say, and upon which they could bring their influence to bear. By this means Scotland got 60 hours of public time—no great allowance, but good use was made of it, and by snatching those 60 hours from the furnace they got a Scotch measure which was a Scotch measure indeed. If that Bill had been in Committee it would have taken, not 60 hours or 120 hours, but—what the English Bill which did more for England than Scotland—he believed 240 hours of public time. It was a Bill which did as much for Scotland and more than the English Bill did for England, because, in addition to a complete system of parish councils, it gave to Scotland a new Local Government Board. The reason for this was it was sent to a body which had some of the leading features of a Scotch Parliament, and the consequence was they got a measure which had given solid satisfaction in Scotland. If that legislation had been conducted in Edinburgh instead of Westminster, not only would Scotland have got as good, and better, a Parish Councils Bill, but there would have been plenty of time for other legislation which Scotland needed. This Session the Government had *in petto* a County Council Bill which he believed every Member would wish to pass. They had, besides, a Crofters Bill, which although not applicable to the whole of Scotland was greatly wanted by public opinion in the whole of Scotland, and was passionately demanded by the counties which might be called the crofting counties. Why could not these Bills see the light? Because not the gateway but the threshold of Parliament was blocked by a great Bill for Wales and Ireland. The hon. Member for Buteshire had raised a difficulty which he seemed to think insuperable. He said :—

> "You must have an Executive independent of the Imperial Executive, or you must have an Executive totally separate from the local Legislature."

He himself did not think this was an alternative at all. They might have an Executive which was dependent on the local Legislature, but which was, at the same time, subordinate to the Imperial Executive. What would happen if they transferred not only Scotch legislation but Scotch administration to Edinburgh? In what respect was it now dependent on the Imperial Executive? Any one who knew the Scotch Office knew it was not dependent on the Imperial Executive at all for practical purposes, except one —for money. Whatever the Scotch Secretary, dependent as he was on this Parliament, and especially on the Scotch Members, desired to do, he would venture to say that in purely Scotch matters he was never checked by the Imperial Executive. Where he was checked, hampered, and fettered was as regarded money. Like others he was absolutely dependent on the Treasury, and it would be no evil if the Scotch Executive had to provide for the needs of Scotland, according to Scotch views, out of Scotch resources, voted by a Scotch Parliament. Two things would come from that. In the first place, Scotch needs, where money was really wanted, would be adequately met with full knowledge of the circumstances, and in those cases where undue pressure was brought to bear occasionally from other parts of Scotland, in a manner which was not quite consistent with the self-respect of Scotland, that would be much less freely done. It was said by the hon. Gentleman opposite that the complaint that Scotland could not get any Legislation came to a question of time alone. Of course, it was all a question of time, but look at what that meant. Take a little measure, trumpery, perhaps, in the eyes of the House, but not in the eyes of Scotchmen, for closing public-houses. Many years ago a Bill for that purpose passed through this House and went to the House of Lords, which cut out of it a provision allowing the large cities to close their public-houses at 10 o'clock, and obliged them to close only at 11 o'clock. The municipalities of every great city in Scotland asked to have the same opportunity as others of closing at 10 o'clock; but, although there was absolute unanimity of opinion on the subject, Scotland was debarred from having what it wanted. The hon. Gentleman said it was only a question of time; but what did that mean? Nine years ago a majority of Scotch Members were in favour of throwing open Parish Councils to the people; but nine years passed before Parliament would pass a Bill. What was nine years? It was one-third of a generation. Was a country which wanted a change of that kind to be told to wait nine years because of a block of business in the House of Commons, and then to be told it was a question of time only? Then, if Scotch Members were persuaded that Scotland knew how to manage her own business, and if they had so voted on two previous occasions, were they to be deterred from doing so again because Scotland was put into the same Resolution with Ireland and with Wales, for whom Scotland had the greatest sympathy. [*Laughter and cheers.*] Why was that a question for laughter? If ever there were two countries that were alike in political and social matters it was Scotland and Wales? Look at the position of Wales? Here was a question that Wales understood, on which she felt deeply, and on which her Members exhibited unprecedented unanimity. Out of 34, 31 were in favour of Disestablishing and Disendowing the Church; and what was the reception they got? They were told they were only 30 Members of Parliament—a mere section—and that it was disgraceful of the Government to think of gratifying them. When the Bill went—as it would go—to the House of Lords, what would be found there? An assembly with plenty of Welsh bishops, without a single Dissenting minister: an assembly with plenty of Welsh landlords without a single representative of the poor farmers and shopkeepers, who supported their own ministers and their own worship, and who, at the same time, saw all the religious Endowments of the country go to another creed. If ever there was a country capable of managing its Ecclesiastical affairs it was Wales. That country felt deeply on two kindred subjects—temperance and education—and yet the people were unable to have their own way in managing these questions, which concerned them so deeply. How sincere, almost pathetic, had been the desire of the Welsh people to get a share of higher education. When, with great difficulty and the help of this House, they had been able to put forward a scheme of Welsh education, it went to the House of Lords, where it met with treatment most unsympathetic, and where the immense power of men who differed from them was conscientiously but ruthlessly exercised to ruin their hopes. When Scotchmen were asking to manage their own Scottish matters, their own liquor laws, and their education, they were more likely to do it freely and gladly, because, at the same time, they could put in a good word for Wales. And what was the result of this? That England and English Liberals in Parliament were in English matters left without the assistance of Welsh, Scotch, and Irish Liberals. He thought it would be a very good thing that England, be she Conservative or be she Liberal, should manage her own affairs in the way which seemed best to her, for he was quite satisfied that they would never get any healthy, progressive feeling in England so long as she had to depend on the assistance of Liberals who lived outside her own confines. As to the condition of business in the House, if any hon. Member was satisfied with it, he could not easily see what was his idea of the functions and purposes of a legislative assembly. Whatever lay before them, he was satisfied that the country would not long or permanently acquiesce in having a Parliament that was blocked by the competition of four nations requiring separate and distinct legislation, and, besides, that had to transact the immense business of the Empire. This Amendment called on the House to say whether this state of things, which every year aggravated, was to last for ever, and those who saw no other remedy for it had no choice but to record their votes in favour of the principle of a proposal which, as the experience of two of the leading countries of the world, Germany and the United States, proved, could be made, by due care, as safe as it would be effective, for giving every portion of the kingdom, with reasonable facility and without undue friction, laws that would, according to its own belief, tend to its own welfare.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down began his speech by giving the House a description of what he thought its proper functions on Friday evenings, and spoke of the great importance of the Debates which take place early in the Session between nine and twelve o'clock, after an exhausting week, and of the position those discussions take in the labours of this House. He appears to think that public opinion, inside and outside the House, is formed by these discussions, and as he said so, I could not help looking round me on a House which was far emptier then than now, and even then far fuller than an hour before, and reflecting that if it was in those circumstances that the vast questions to which he alluded have to be threshed out there was but a small prospect of our arriving at any rational conclusion. He went further, and he told us that, although these Friday night functions might possess their full significance, it was absolutely necessary that the Government of the day should exercise no control on the Vote Members should give; and I suppose it is for that reason that all the more important of his colleagues have until just now abstained from being present. The right hon Gentleman further stated that when a Government was growing old—I do not know whether he meant us to understand that this Government was growing old—that when a Government was growing old in office, they were extremely reluctant to adopt any Resolutions that might commit them to Herculean labours, and therefore I understand that the right hon. Gentleman himself was put up as the *maximum* of Ministerial support which committed the Government to nothing. Sir, I differ entirely from the views the right hon. Gentleman has taken of the importance of debates of the character we are now engaged in, and I associate myself entirely with what fell from my hon. and learned Friend near me when he said that they had an ineffaceable air of unreality. If I looked at this question totally from the point of view of one of that party whose main object it is to prevent the proposal for Home Rule having practical effect, I confess I should rejoice to see a Motion of this sort brought forward, supported even by a small fraction of the Government and by a large number of their followers; for if there ever was a Resolution calculated in the eyes of any thinking man from one end of the country to the other, be he a Welshman, be he an Irishman, be he a Scotchman, or be he an Englishman, to turn the Home Rule proposals of the Government into absolute ridicule It is a Resolution which, if carried into effect, would give us some sort of Home Rule all round, with four executives—no, five executives. I did the proposal great injustice—five executives and five separate representative assemblies. Does anybody think that that would be seriously approved by the people of this country? They are not very much in love with Home Rule as it is, but when they are told that Home Rule for Ireland is to be a mere prelude to this kind of Home Rule all round, and when they draw the inference from that, which is that when once you have given privileges to Ireland corresponding to those contained in the Home Rule Bill of two years ago, you cannot give Scotland less and you cannot give Wales less—do you think that they will be more in love with Home Rule? As an opponent of Home Rule, I rejoice to see the kind of support which is given to this measure by so important a Member of the Home Rule Party as the hon. Member for Mayo. In his speech, which was delivered with his usual eloquence and passion, there was not one scintilla of argument in favour of the Resolution for which he is going to vote, not one word about the effect which such a proposal as this must have upon the very fibre and substance of the British Constitution. The hon. Member's sole reason for supporting this Resolution was that he had received in the past, and hoped to receive in the future, a very large measure of support from various Welshmen and various Scotchmen, and that in his opinion it would be most ungrateful if he on his side did not do his share of the log-rolling and did not vote for something which Welshmen and Scotchmen said they desired. I am sure the hon. Member will not assert that I have over-coloured or altered the substance of his speech. The hon. Member's reason for voting for this Resolution is that certain Scotch Representatives and certain Welsh Representatives in this House have shown a desire to help him to Home Rule in Ireland, and that it would be most ungrateful of him if he did not help them to Home Rule in Scotland and in Wales. That is what is commonly called "log-rolling." It means that the Members from Ireland have publicly avowed that they are not going to vote upon Motions or Bills according to their merits, but that they are going to vote on Bills and Motions according to the measure of support that they expect from the persons who desire to see those Resolutions or Bills passed by this House. That is a mode of procedure which will bring discredit upon the whole of our deliberations; and when the Secretary for Scotland tells this House that this is an opportunity when Members, apart from Government pressure, may for once be allowed to give a vote according to the real opinions which they have formed as to the merits of the question, I would venture to point out to him that his benevolent intentions are unhappily destroyed when we know that the Members of one important section of the House are not going to vote according to the merits of the proposal, but out of a sense of gratitude.

Mr. J. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has rather misrepresented my views. I can see nothing dishonourable in saying that, inasmuch as the great majority of the Scotch and Welsh people have assisted loyally the great majority of the Irish people to obtain what they want, we should assist the majority of the Scotch and Welsh peoples to obtain what they want.

Mr. BALFOUR: I quite admit that there is nothing dishonourable in that, and I made no allegation of dishonour. What I said was, that such a course of action would destroy the value of the deliberations of this House. The right hon. Gentleman who preceded me went into a great many details as to the injuries inflicted upon Wales and Scotland respectively by delays in legislation. I shall not follow him in a discussion of those details. After all, the British Empire is not to be broken up because a Bill passes five or six years later than its authors would desire. Legislation may be too slow or too rapid, but no arrangement that you can make, no cutting up of this Empire into innumerable fragments, will provide you with machinery which will make it impossible to pass criticisms of that character upon our proceedings. It appears to be absolute lunacy for this country to pursue alone among the nations of the world an opposite course to that which has built up every other great empire with which we have to compete. Look at the process by which America, starting as a series of Colonies independent of each other, has gradually been welded, in spite of its Constitution, into a homogeneous whole. Look at the process by which Italy has been converted from a geographical expression into a national reality. Look at the process by which German unity has been built up. [*Cheers and Counter Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen do not appear to see that I am describing a process and not a Constitution. It is a vital distinction. I say that the process of change, the movement, the progress—that is the point—of every one of these nations America, Italy, Germany—and of course the same process is going on in our own colonies—has been to bind together and not to loosen. And I would ask Gentlemen who doubt that I have given a correct diagnosis of the history of Europe, or of some parts of Europe, to refer to the eloquent passage, which I think I quoted some years ago in this House, from the writings of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, where he points out, in admirable language, that one of the great benefits conferred by the French Revolution upon France was that it stamped out the very last remnants of those divisions which even the power of French Monarchy had been unable to efface. Let the House remember that if you establish separate organisations because you find already existing what you call national differences or differences of sentiment between different portions of the population, the separate organizations which you establish have the inevitable tendency to increase, to make perpetual, and to make ineffaceable, the distinction which originally called them into being. It would be absolutely impossible to give Scotland or Wales, and, as I think, Ireland—though Ireland is not in question in this Resolution—a separate organization without by that very act laying the foundation of future differences between different portions of this island, which must inevitably weaken the whole unity of Britain. I feel that if we are to maintain our position in that great national competition it must be by doing that which every other nation has been forced to do, by binding closer together elements which, under different circumstances, might tend to separate, and I feel that this federation, as you call it, is not a step, and cannot be made a step, in the direction of drawing together closer the Colonies to Britain itself, but as a step for destroying that centre around which the Colonies must crystallize if the British Empire is to remain united. There is no sacrifice, not even the sacrifice of the Constitution of this country itself, that I would not make if I could see every scattered member of our great Empire drawn together into a homogeneous whole, as close as that which we in this island constitute at the present moment. But, believe me, the last hope of carrying out any such beneficent arrangement will be lost if in our madness—as I think—because this or that Bill was not referred to a Grand Committee, because this or that Bill was not passed into law, because the law made such an amendment, or refused to make such another amendment —if for trifling reasons like these—trifling, I mean, as compared with the issues at stake—we are going to enter upon a course, which, in the words of the Secretary for Scotland, will inflict upon the Government which undertakes it a herculean labour, and which, as the result of that labour, can only end in the absolute destruction of the Empire. This is an abstract Resolution, and I have, perhaps, allowed myself an undue measure of warmth in dealing with something which can have no practical issue. I have, perhaps, taken seriously that which I venture to say is intrinsically ridiculous. But though I have misled the House if I have induced anybody to think that I imagine the British Empire is in danger, from this or any other abstract form of words, I do ask the House in its own interests not to make itself ridiculous. Surely we shall not add to our dignity in the view of the public if—after three hours' discussion, in the absence of a very large number of the most important Members of the House, with the Government Bench unadorned by the leading Members who usually occupy it, in a House compared with its whole numbers relatively small—we are to pass a Resolution which, if it means anything, means this: that in the minds of those who vote for it some colossal change in the relation between the different parts of the Empire is to be brought about; that the ancient Constitution of this country is to be recast in some method wholly unknown; that we are to introduce a complexity into our affairs, which at the best must produce inevitable friction, and which at the worst will prove a centrifugal force, driving far apart populations which, by the very circumstances in which Providence has placed them, are evidently intended to form members, and can only do their work in the world by being members, of one united whole.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire), who rose amidst cries of impatience: Mr. Speaker,—I am in favour of Home Rule on a federal basis, and I intended to speak on that subject, but at this late hour I hope the House will take my speech as delivered.

The House divided:—Noes 128; Ayes 102.—(Division List No. 38.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved,—That, in the opinion of this House, in order to give speedier and fuller effect to the special desires and wants of the respective nationalities constituting the United Kingdom, and with a view to increase the efficiency of Imperial Parliament to deal with Imperial affairs, it is desirable to devolve upon Legislatures in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England respectively the management and control of their domestic affairs.

Supply,—Committee upon Monday next.

## COURTS OF LAW FEES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read 2°, and committed for Tuesday next.

House adjourned at Ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Monday, 1st April 1895.*

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### ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, to be printed, and to be read 2ª on Thursday next—(*The Lord Monkswell*). (No. 54.)

### TREATY SERIES, No. 7 (1895).

Convention between Great Britain and Roumania respecting false indications of origin on goods; signed at Bucharest, $\frac{\text{March 20}}{\text{April 1,}}$ 1893 (ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, March $\frac{1}{13}$, 1894); with a list of British Colonies which have acceded thereto under Article VI.; presented and ordered to lie on the Table.

### BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES.

General abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England in the year 1894. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

**LORD KNUTSFORD**: May I ask the the noble Earl opposite whether he can give us any information about the holidays?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Earl of KIMBERLEY)**: I think that the most convenient course will be that, for all practical purposes, the House should adjourn to-morrow week for three weeks. It will, however, be necessary that the House meet once during that interval for the purpose of expressing Her Majesty's approval of the new Speaker; but the House would on that occasion, only meet for that formal purpose. For all practical purposes, therefore, it is proposed that this House should adjourn to-morrow week for three weeks.

### THE SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

**LORD BALFOUR**: I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is the fact that although the Scotch Education Code was laid on the Table of the House on the 4th of March, it was not available for Members of the House until the 18th; and, if so, at what date the period during which the Code must remain before Parliament for consideration will come to an end? If the facts are as suggested in this question correct, then it seems to me that something must be wrong with the arrangement, either of the Scotch Education Department, or the printing of the House. I believe the Scotch Education Code was laid on the Table of the House on March 4th, though I do not think it was available to your Lordships until the 18th. From what I have since heard, I believe that the fault does not lie with the Education Department, which had really placed the Code on the Table of both Houses of Parliament on that date in such a form as to allow of its being printed and circulated. If that statement is confirmed by the noble Lord, then I hope either the Black Rod Committee or the proper authority will be applied to in order to learn why so long an interval elapsed before the Code was available for your Lordships. The second portion of the question was very important. Instead of 30 days being available for the consideration of the Code, only twelve days were left within which the House might be enabled to consider its provisions, or whether any action should be taken against them.

**THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord TWEEDMOUTH)** said, he had put himself in communication with three authorities in connection with this subject—the Scotch Office, the printers, and the authorities of the House. On the 4th of March the Scottish Education Code was laid on the Table of both Houses. The same messenger that brought the form that was laid on the Table of the House also brought the Code in its completed form to the printers. It was not now usual to lay the manuscript document on the Table of the House, because it had been found that enterprising members of the Press had contrived to gain access to the document, and had published it, either in whole or in part, or they had made use of their enterprise to get remuneration from newspapers as a whole. At the same moment that the "dummy" copy of the Code was laid on the Table the actual manuscript was placed in the hands of

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

the printers. The printers got to work at once, and the printing was completed by Friday the 8th. At the Evening Sitting of Friday the 8th it was obtainable in the Vote Office of the House of Commons, and on the 9th the printed documents were delivered in both Houses and to all the Public Offices. Owing to a mistake of some person connected with the printing office the Code was not included in the list sent out on March 11th as among the papers which were circulated, and which were to be obtained by Members on application. As a matter of fact, the paper was in their Lordships House on March 9th, and was available for Members on Monday the 11th.

LORD BALFOUR: We had no notice.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the notice was not put on the printed paper sent out with the notices on the Monday morning, but he did not think that this fact could have been of any great inconvenience to the Members of the House or to the public. As a matter of fact, the Code appeared in the Scotch newspapers on the 11th, and there were leading articles criticising it on the same morning. The paper having been laid on the Table on March 4th, the day on which the period expired was Wednesday next, April 3rd.

### SHOP HOURS BILL.

Read 3ª.—(*Lord Ribblesdale.*)

The House adjourned at Twenty minutes to Five o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, 1st April 1895.*

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The House met at Three of the clock.

### NATIONAL GALLERY.

Copy ordered,—Of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury for the year 1894.—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 199.]

*Lord Tweedmouth.*

### TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) (No. 2) REDEMPTION.

Committee, to consider the expediency: Of authorising the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland, by payment of a capital sum: Of authorising the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required: And, of authorising the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883 (Queen's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### MACKEREL DUTIES IN RUSSIA AND UNITED STATES.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the fact that the import duty on cured herrings exported from this country to Russia is 7s. a barrel and to the United States 4s. 2d. a barrel, while on cured mackerel it is 28s. a barrel in Russia and 6s. 3d. in the United States, will the Government, as the mackerel industry is a very important one for the poorer parts of Ireland, make representations in those countries with a view to the herring and mackerel duties being equalised?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Her Majesty's Government would be very glad, whenever a favourable opportunity presented itself, to do anything that was possible to obtain better terms for the mackerel industry. But the respective duties in the United States and in Russia have been fixed to suit what are thought to be the interests of the trade or of the people of those countries. The Governments of the United States and of Russia naturally claim to be not only the best, but the only, judges of what those interests are, and in the absence of any Treaty rights affecting these particular duties, Her Majesty's Government have no ground on which to base a representation, nor would any such representation tend to secure the lowering of the duties in question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether there is no precedent for making representations to a foreign Government with reference to the taxation on English-made goods?

SIR E. GREY: I cannot say that there is no precedent, but I am sure that, in the absence of any treaty rights, there would be no hope of any good result from making these representations, though, if they thought otherwise, the Government would be very glad to make them.

MR. T. M. HEALY gave notice that he should call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

### THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, in view of the long period during which the matter has been under consideration, when a settlement of the Irish mail contract may be expected; and whether in such contract due regard will be paid to the requirements of the public convenience by shortening the sea journey by at least half an hour?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether any arrangement has yet been arrived at with the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company for the acceleration of the Irish Mail Service; and, if so, when he expects to be in a position to state the terms of agreement?

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether he is in a position to state the terms of the Irish Mail Contract *viâ* Kingstown and Holyhead; and whether acceleration and increased accommodation will be afforded?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): As I have already stated in the House of Commons, it is my desire to obtain under any new contract for the conveyance of the Mails between Holyhead and Kingstown an acceleration of half an hour, together with all requisite accommodation for the Mails, and accommodation for passengers at least equal to that afforded in the *Ireland*. The negotiations with the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company are still proceeding, and I have written asking the Directors to see me in the course of the next few days. I am glad to take this opportunity of stating that the special service for accelerating the Saturday American Mail will commence on Saturday next. The effect of the acceleration will be to lessen the detention of the mail steamer at Queenstown by about four hours, and probably enable letters to be delivered in New York on Friday, in time to allow of a reply being sent by the homeward mail on Saturday.

MR. FIELD: Can the right hon. Gentleman mention a specific time within which he can give us the reply for which we have been waiting so long?

*MR. A. MORLEY: The negotiations are proceeding. Within the next few days I shall see representatives of the directors, and I hope that that interview will enable me to make a statement to the House, but I do not know whether it will be satisfactory.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May we expect a definite statement before Easter?

*MR. A. MORLEY: If possible I will make such a statement.

MR. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): In the new contract has provision been made for better passenger accommodation?

*MR. A. MORLEY: No, Sir; I have not felt at liberty to insist on more than I have already stated.

MR. W. KENNY: Have not representations been made to the right hon. Gentleman on that subject?

*MR. A. MORLEY: Yes, Sir; but there must be some limit to what the Government can reasonably be called upon to demand.

MR. FIELD: Will care be taken that under any new contract the service shall be as regular and continuous as the the service was before?

*MR. A. MORLEY: I know that in the past the service has been remarkably regular, and I hope that that regularity will be continued.

### ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the wife of the Clerk to the Guardians of St. Asaph Union procured signatures from the paupers to a petition against the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales, in the presence of the master of the workhouse, and without the knowledge of the Guardians; and whether he will take steps to prevent paupers, whom the Legislature has disfranchised for the reason that they cannot be expected to exercise the franchise as free and independent electors, from having pressure put upon them to sign Petitions to this House?

Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that in several places in Wales the local authorities had sent round the town-crier to prevent people from signing petitions against the Bill, and whether he would take steps to prevent this?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I have made inquiry on this subject, and I find that the wife of the clerk to the Guardians of St. Asaph Union did obtain the signatures of some of the inmates of the workhouse to a petition against the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. I am, however, informed, that only those who expressed a wish to sign were allowed to do so, and that not the slightest pressure was put upon any one. I cannot but think that the action of this lady was ill-advised, but I am unable to say that the paupers in a workhouse have not the right to petition this House if they desire to do so. With regard to the question of the hon. Gentleman opposite, I have no information on the subject.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, may I ask whether he is aware that, since the guardians of the workhouse have abolished the paid chaplain and invited the clergy and ministers of the various denominations to perform services without payment the services of the Church of England have never been omitted, but on 22 Sundays the Dissenters have neglected to provide any service?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. That question does not arise out of the right hon. Gentleman's answer.

*Mr. S. Smith.*

## ENDOWED SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. C. ROUNDELL (York, W.R., Shipton): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner, with reference to Endowed Secondary Schools in England and Wales, for which schemes have been made, whether it is the practice of the Charity Commissioners in all cases to exempt the office of head master from any clerical restriction; and, if otherwise, when the qualification of Orders in the Church of England is required?

*The PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Suffolk, Eye): In all schemes, except for schools within Section 19 of the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, the exemption of the masters from clerical restrictions is made obligatory by Section 18, and in practice the restrictions in question are not inserted in schemes, even for the excepted schools, no desire apparently existing to continue or establish them. The object of the Commissioners is to give the widest field of choice to the governing bodies.

## OUTRAGE IN COUNTY ARMAGH.

Mr. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that, on the evening of the 13th January, and again on the evening of the 2nd March, the windows of the house of Charles M'Keown, a Catholic Nationalist farmer, residing at Ballygargin, County Armagh, were smashed by large stones, which were thrown into a room in which five young children were sleeping, thus imperilling their lives, and that a web of valuable yarn in the house was destroyed by the stones thus thrown into the house; whether he is aware that, after the occurrence of the 13th January, Mr. M'Keown reported the matter to the police at Queen Street Barrack, who paid no attention whatever to his complaint, although after the second outrage some constables came out to see the scene of the outrage; and whether any steps have been taken, or are contemplated, to bring to justice the perpetrators of these outrages?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): My attention had not been drawn to this case. I now, learn, however, that no injury was done to the house of the farmer referred to on either of the dates mentioned in the question, but on the 18th February and again on the 10th March some panes of glass were broken and a web of fabric injured, the entire damage being estimated at a couple of shillings. One person has been made amenable for the offence, and will be tried at Petty Sessions on the 8th of April, and the District Inspector of Constabulary tells me there is not the slightest ground for suggesting that there is anything of a party or religious complexion in the case.

### BALLYMACARRET POOR LAW ELECTION.

**Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, before the voting papers for the Poor Law Election for Ballymacarret, there being four candidates in the field, were issued, a communication was sent to the Local Government Board requesting that the Clerk of the Belfast Union be instructed to place the names of the candidates in alphabetical order on the voting papers, and that this request has been disregarded, with the result that the names of two candidates, Dr. William Gibson and Mr. James Holywood, who are the nominees of the Belfast Conservative Association, appear on the list before the names of the other candidates; and whether the Local Government Board intend to take any action in the matter?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The communication referred to was received by the Local Government Board, who, in reply, stated that the regulations for the annual election of Guardians had been framed, and that the Board could not interfere with the discretion of the Returning Officer in the manner requested. I have had inquiries made as to the practice adopted in this respect in Unions outside Ulster, and am informed that in the Unions of Cork City, Galway, Dublin (North), Kilkenny, and Sligo, it is not the practice of the Returning Officers to arrange the names of candidates in alphabetical order.

### RAILWAY ACCIDENT IN IRELAND.

**Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a collision took place on the 24th of January last at Crossgar Station, on the Belfast and County Down Railway, owing to two engines being allowed on the one section, contrary to the stipulated block rules and regulations; and whether there has been a Board of Trade inquiry, or any official report of this collision, or any investigation formed or otherwise into this occurrence?

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): I have communicated with the railway company, whose general manager states that the rules for block working were properly carried out, but that the accident happened through the negligence of the driver of an empty waggon train, who overran the signals which were against him, and collided with an engine engaged in shunting a horse box. The cause of the accident appears to be quite clear, and, as at present advised, I do not propose to direct an inquiry.

### MAINTENANCE OF LUNATICS.

**Mr. J. TUITE** (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, has his attention been drawn to the resolutions adopted by Lunatic Asylum Boards in Ireland, asking for an increase of the Government Capitation Grant; whether he is aware that, since the Grant was first made, the cost of maintenance has increased, owing to the adoption of a more humane treatment of the patients, and expenses for structural improvements, made at the instance of the Board of Control; and, whether, having regard to this additional and necessary expenditure, he will recommend a proportionate augmentation of the Capitation allowance.

***Mr. J. MORLEY**: A suggestion has been made to me with respect to an increase of the Government Capitation Grant for Lunatic Asylum Boards in Ireland. The Government Grant was first made in 1874, and was fixed at 4s. per week in respect of each patient. The average cost of maintenance was £24 1s. 2d. in the year 1875, as against £21 14s. in 1893 (the last year for which this information is available), so that no increase has taken place in those years in the cost of maintenance. The Capitation Grant is made with a view to the improved maintenance and treatment of the insane poor, and is not applicable to meet the cost of structural alterations of asylums, for which separate loans are granted under an Act of 1893.

### DUTIES ON BRITISH GOODS.

**COLONEL C. E. HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, if the recent personal representations of the Right Hon. Cecil Rhodes, Premier of Cape Colony, have modified in any degree Lord Ripon's refusal of the request made by the South Africa Company, that a cardinal article in the Constitution of Matabeleland and Mashonaland should prevent the duties upon British imported goods being increased.

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES** (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The Secretary of State has not modified his views in regard to the matter mentioned in the question.

**COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT** gave notice that he should call attention to this matter on the Civil Service Estimates, and move a reduction of the hon. Gentleman's salary.

### THE POOR LAW.

**MR. G. HOWELL** (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether, as no promise can be given of a Bill to consolidate the Poor Laws during the present Session, he will consider the propriety of preparing a digest of the statutes relating to the poor, similar to that issued some years ago by the Board of Trade relating to merchant shipping, and also those issued by the Local Government Board some years ago relating to Sanitary Authorities.

**MR. SHAW LEFEVRE**: The statutes relating to the poor are extremely numerous, and the preparation of a digest of them would require a great amount of time and labour. Many of them are almost obsolete. In the existing great pressure of business on the Department, I cannot hold out expectations of this work being undertaken at the present time.

**MR. G. HOWELL**: I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to this matter on the Estimates, and move a reduction in the right hon. Gentleman's salary.

*Mr. J. Morley.*

### DISCHARGE OF FEVER PATIENTS.

**MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the alleged cases of the consequences of the too early discharge of patients from the North-Eastern Fever Hospital; whether he has seen the letter of the 11th February from the Islington Medical Officer of Health on the subject, addressed to the Local Government Board, but not yet replied to; whether he is aware that, in the case of Mr. Holland's children, two died and the father was attacked with scarlet fever, having caught the fever, it is alleged, from their third child who was sent home while still desquamating; and whether he will order an inquiry into the whole matter?

**MR. B. L. COHEN** (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the case of William Holland, aged 16 months, whose parents reside at 39, Ashburton Grove, Islington, and who is stated by Dr. M. J. Bulger, of 145, Seven Sisters Road, N., to have been discharged on 21st January from the Metropolitan Asylums Board's Hospital at Tottenham whilst in a state of desquamation from scarlet fever; whether he is aware that the father, brother, and sister of William Holland, who were all quite well when William Holland was returned from the hospital, have since been attacked with scarlet fever, from which the two children have died; whether he is aware that the last communication from the hospital to the mother of the children on 25th February was to the effect that Archibald Holland was decidedly better, and that there was no cause for anxiety, and that when the mother reached the hospital on 27th February, in obedience to a summons by telegram, she found her son dead; and whether he will direct an inquiry into the circumstances of the case, with a view of preventing the discharge from the hospital of the Metropolitan Asylums Board of patients while yet in a condition dangerous to themselves, and likely to spread infection amongst all those with whom they come in contact?

**SIR A. K. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will answer, at the same time, a Supplementary Question of which I have given him notice. It is, whether there are any approved general regulations governing such cases as that of William Holland; and, if so, what is the substance of them, and whether there are exceptional reasons for the delay in the reply of the Local Government Board to the letter of the Medical Officer of Health of the 11th of February?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I will answer these questions, and also one on the same subject of which the hon. Member for the Southern Division of Islington has given me private notice. I have communicated with the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District, and the clerk informs me that he has caused full inquiries to be made as to the cases of Mr. Holland and his children, and that he has seen the Medical Superintendent of the North-Eastern Hospital, and that there appears to be no justification for attributing the illness of the father, or the illness and death of the two children, to any infection arising from the premature discharge of the child William from the Hospital. The clerk states that in the cases of the two children there was evidence on admission that the disease from which the patients were suffering was diphtheria and not scarlet fever, and the result of a bacteriological examination made by the Director of Laboratories of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons fully confirmed the hospital diagnosis. The clerk further states that Mrs. Holland told the nurse that her husband's illness was diphtheria and not scarlet fever. The allegation that Mrs. Holland was informed on the 25th February that Archibald Holland was decidedly better, and that there was no cause for anxiety, is stated to be denied by the nurse, who maintains that she used her utmost efforts to convince Mrs. Holland of the extreme gravity of her child's illness. The letter which appears to be referred to in the question by the hon. Member for North Islington relates to a different case. A copy of it was sent to the Asylum managers for their observations, but these observations have not at present been received. In answer to the further question, I assure the hon. Gentleman (Sir A. K. Rollit) that the matter is receiving the careful consideration of the Medical Officer of our Board.

MR. COHEN: May I ask whether it is the fact that the child first attacked was sent home while in a state of desquamation?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am sure that is not so. Every reasonable precaution was taken, and I am assured the child could not have communicated the disease to the two children who have died.

MR. BARTLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the medical officer of the Union states that the child was sent home while in a state of peeling?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I give the statement on the authority of the clerk to the Asylums Board. I do not know what the medical officer of the Union has said.

### CIVIL SERVICE SECOND DIVISION CLERKS.

MR. H. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a petition from the junior section of the Second Division Clerks in the Civil Service, asking for an increase of salary and an addition to their annual leave of absence, was received by the Treasury last December; whether the Treasury have yet arrived at any decision on the subject; and when the petitioners may expect a reply?

MR. J. A. RENTOUL (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is intended to take any action with regard to the memorial forwarded to the Treasury in December last by the Second Division Clerks appointed under the Order in Council of 21st March, 1890, and to which no reply has been received?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham): The memorial referred to in these questions is still under consideration, and I cannot say when an answer will be given.

### TEARING UP UNION CLOTHES.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the report in the *Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter* of the plea of guilty by James Doyle at the Borough Police Court, and the sentence of three months' imprisonment inflicted on him for tearing up a trousers and vest, the property of the Poor Law Union; whether he is aware that the prisoner before sentence is reported to have said in explanation—

> "That he was an outdoor worker, and been out of work since the frost set in; that he had been roaming round the country seeking employment, but there was none; he had to sleep in casual wards, and break stones afterwards; and to sleep in barns and behind hedges, and his clothes got into such a wretched condition that he was ashamed to walk the streets. He went into the casual ward on Saturday night and tore his clothes up;"

and whether so severe a sentence will be carried out?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): Yes. James Doyle tore up both his own clothes and the trousers and vest which were supplied to him by the Union. It was for the latter act that he was sentenced. Offences of a similar nature have been so common in this district recently that the Justices inform me that they felt bound to pass an exemplary sentence. The case is one in which, if the prisoner's prison conduct is good, I shall feel justified in advising a considerable mitigation of the sentence.

### IRISH PRISONERS.

MR. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether O'Callaghan, an Irish political prisoner confined in Portland, has lost one eye since he has been imprisoned, and the other eye is now affected; and whether, in view of the fact that he is over 12 years in prison, he will be released?

MR. ASQUITH: The sight of the left eye of O'Callaghan, an Irish prisoner confined in Portland, was lost from an accident some years before O'Callaghan's imprisonment. In July, 1893, the left eyeball was removed; the operation was perfectly satisfactory, and he made a good recovery, but still continued to suffer locally from a chronic affection of the right eye. In the circumstances of the case I felt myself justified, with the concurrence of the Secretary for Scotland, in recommending his release upon medical grounds, and he was released on March 28.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that M'Cann, an Irish political prisoner confined in Portland, is an infirm old man beyond 70 years of age and over 12 years in prison, he will now be released?

MR. ASQUITH: This is one of the prisoners who were tried and sentenced by the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh in December, 1883. I am in communication with the Secretary for Scotland in regard to his case.

### SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION AT LOWESTOFT.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the Cunningham School for Girls and Infants, Lowestoft, and has reported that he allowed 159 places, thereby restoring to the school 29 additional places, whereas the local inspector had spoken of the painfully overcrowded accommodation, and had refused to recognise it for more than 130 places; if he can state who is responsible at the Education Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down the Chief Inspector in response to the appeal of the managers; whether he has taken, or intends to take, any action with regard to Her Majesty's Inspector; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take, any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the Report of the Inspector?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): No request was made by the managers of this school for the Chief Inspector or any other inspector to be sent, and therefore no such request was refused.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the Harvey Street Infants' School, Lowestoft, and has reported that he found the whole school could march without difficulty, whereas the local Inspector had alluded to the fact that considerable improvement must be effected as regards marching space; if he can state who is responsible at the Education

Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down a Chief Inspector in response to the appeal of the managers made in June last; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take, any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the Report of the Inspector?

MR. ACLAND: No request was made by the managers of this school for the Chief Inspector or any other inspector to be sent, and therefore no such request was refused.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the Central Girls' School, Lowestoft, and has reported that the staff is above the number required by the Code, being sufficient for 250, with an average attendance of 215 only, whereas the local inspector had alluded to the weakness of the staff; if he can state who is responsible at the Education Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down the Chief Inspector in response to the written appeal of the managers in June last; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take, any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the report of the Inspector?

MR. ACLAND: No request was made by the managers of this school for the Chief Inspector or any other inspector to be sent, and therefore no such request was refused.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with regard to the fact that the senior Chief Inspector has now visited the Arnold Street Infants' School, Lowestoft, and has reported that, with a little management in the arrangement of desks, the whole school can march without discomfort, whereas the local inspector had alluded to the insufficient marching space, if he can state who is responsible at the Education Department for the refusal in the first instance to send down the Chief Inspector in response to the written appeal of the managers in June last; and whether he has taken, or proposes to take any steps at the Department to prevent a repetition of such circumstances in the case of any voluntary school appealing to the Department against the report of the inspector?

MR. ACLAND: No request was made by the managers of this school for the Chief Inspector or any other Inspector to be sent, and therefore no such request was refused.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education with regard to the fact that the managers of the group of schools which include Clapham Road and St. Andrew's, Lowestoft, wrote to the Department in June, 1894, requesting an interview with the Vice President by way of appeal against the report of Her Majesty's Inspector, and that a reply was sent declining to receive a deputation, and also to the fact that thereupon a further letter was sent to the Department, asking that a Chief Inspector might come down, if he can state who is responsible at the Department for refusing to comply with this request?

MR. ACLAND: The request made was for an interview with myself. This I was unable to grant, but offered the managers an interview with one of the permanent officials of the Department. They did not avail themselves of this offer, but proposed instead that a Chief Inspector should meet them on the spot; and this last request, after a statement of the names of the schools and the dates of the reports, together with any evidence the managers desired to offer, had been asked for, was not refused, but complied with.

*MR. H. S. FOSTER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if all the facts stated in my five preceding questions are correctly stated.

MR. ACLAND: They are substantially accurate.

## TRAWL FISHING AND THE RULE OF THE ROAD AT SEA.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he has received from the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association the copy of a Resolution passed at their annual meeting on the 19th instant urging that, in view of the strong dissatisfaction which exists with some of the new Rules of the Road at Sea as affecting the trawl fishing industry, a proper opportunity may be afforded for tendering the necessary evidence to the Select Committee as affecting the fishing industry; and whether he will endeavour to see that facilities are afforded to the association for that purpose?

MR. BRYCE: I have received a copy of the Resolution to which the hon. Member refers, and the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association have been informed, in reply, that the Select Committee will only deal with the subject of international sound signals in fog, and that other questions affecting the Rule of the Road at Sea will, therefore, not fall within the scope of its inquiry.

### SPIRITS IMPORTED INTO BRITISH POSSESSIONS.

MR. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies how many gallons of spirits are now annually imported into each of the following British possessions in West Africa; the Oil Rivers Protectorate, Lagos, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and Gambia; whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies is aware that great demoralisation is being wrought amongst many tribes in these countries by this traffic in spirits, to the serious injury of their legitimate trade and industrial progress and development; and whether, in view of the fact that the Royal Niger Company are stated to have practically extinguished the traffic within their territory, and it is also excluded wholly from Khama's country and other extensive regions in South Africa with the most beneficial results to the natives, Her Majesty's Government propose to take steps to prohibit the importation of spirits into the several British West African possessions?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The number of gallons annually imported into the Possessions enumerated according to the latest returns may be placed at—Oil Rivers Protectorate, 1,355,000; Lagos, 1,680,000; Gold Coast, 1,450,000; Sierra Leone, 292,000; Gambia, 47,000. I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to the hon. Member for the Tyneside Division of Northumberland on March 7; but I may mention that the Governor of the Gold Coast, in a Report which has just reached me, denies altogether the existence of any general demoralisation amongst the natives as the result of drink.

### WEIGHING OF CATTLE.

*MR. A. BIRRELL (Fife, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that farmers in buying feeding stuffs for cattle are required to pay to the last pound, but are not able to obtain the weight of their fat cattle in auction markets also to the last pound where dial weighing machines are in use; whether the Board will in future decline to seal or otherwise sanction dial weighing machines on the ground that they are neither "sufficient nor suitable" within the meaning of the Act of 1891; and whether he will introduce a Bill to give a statutory definition of what is sufficient and suitable accommodation for weighing cattle?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HERBERT C. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am aware that dial weighing machines are in use which are not, and, indeed, which cannot be graded so as to show pounds; but I am not prepared in the present state of agricultural opinion to say that such machines are *ipso facto*, insufficient and unsuitable. I am quite willing, however, to receive, and, if possible, to give effect to, any representations which may be made to me by farmers using a particular market or mart. It does not appear to me to be desirable or necessary to attempt further legislation on this subject in the direction suggested by my hon. Friend.

### EXCISE REVENUE IN THE PUNJAB.

MR. S. SMITH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the large increase in the amount of Excise Revenue in the Punjab during the last seven years, amounting to nearly 50 per cent. on the Revenue of 1888; and whether the Indian Government is taking any steps to prevent the corresponding amount of drunkenness which may be expected to follow this increased consumption of alcohol?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE

RUSSELL, North Beds), answering in the absence of Mr. H. H. FOWLER: It is true that the Excise Revenue in the Punjab has largely increased. The Government of India, by enhancing taxation and by repressing illicit distillation, is doing what it can to discourage excessive consumption, and this policy will be pursued in the future as circumstances may permit.

### INDOOR PAUPERS IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. H. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, considering the extraordinary results to Boards of Guardians of certain parishes and Unions in the Metropolis, owing to the grant of 4d. per day, under Section 43 of the Local Government Act, 1888, for every indoor pauper maintained by them, being calculated on a certificate based on the average number of indoor poor so maintained during the five years ended 25th March, 1888, which is now necessarily very largely varied by subsequent alterations in the population, he will take such steps as may be necessary under Sub-Section (B) of Section 43 of the Act before mentioned to have amended certificates prepared and issued; and whether he has been made aware, in particular, of the case of the Wandsworth and Clapham Union, which only receives the grant on a daily average of 1,624 indoor paupers, while at the present time the number chargeable exceeds 2,800?

*MR. P. M. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that in the district governed by the Wandsworth and Clapham Union the grant of 4d. per day, under Section 43 of the Local Government Act, 1888, which was intended to be for every indoor pauper maintained by the Guardians, is, owing to the fact that the calculation is based upon a certificate some years old, paid on a daily average of 1,624 only, whereas the actual number of indoor paupers chargeable on the Union exceeds 2,800; and whether, as the contribution consequently falls so far short of the proper sum, he is prepared to take immediate steps to remedy the anomaly in the interests of the ratepayers of the Union?

MR. J. BURNS (Battersea): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the injustice arising from the working of Section 43 of the Local Government Act, 1888; and, if so, what steps are contemplated to remove it?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Under Section 43 of the Local Government Act, 1888, the amount of the grant of 4d. per day for each indoor pauper paid to each Metropolitan Union by the London County Council is determined by the average number of indoor paupers maintained in that Union during the five financial years ended on March 25, 1888, and the Section expressly declares that it shall continue to be reckoned in accordance with the same average number unless Parliament otherwise determine. If, therefore, the basis of the apportionment of this grant is to be altered legislation will be necessary, and I should not be justified in submitting any proposals to Parliament on the matter until I have had full opportunity of ascertaining the views held with respect to it by the London County Council, who have to pay the grant, and the various Boards of Guardians who receive it. At present I have only received communications on the subject from two Boards of Guardians in London. I may add that the question of apportionment between the different parishes is one of considerable difficulty, as the Boards of Guardians pursue varying policies with regard to outdoor and indoor relief, and no account is taken in the Act of the number of outdoor paupers.

*MR. THORNTON asked the right hon. Gentleman if he was not aware that the anomaly in question was increasing day by day in the borough of Clapham and Battersea, owing to the sale of old properties for building purposes around Clapham Common, and whether he could not see his way to some legislative action.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, it was not an easy subject to deal with without, at all events, the full sanction of the London County Council and a certain general approval of the parishes concerned in the matter.

MR. KIMBER inquired if the right hon. Gentleman would ascertain the views of the London County Council.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he would communicate with the London County Council.

## THE PAMIRS.

Mr. G. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the long promised Agreement between the British and Russian Governments, with reference to the Pamirs, has now been concluded; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

Sir E. GREY: The Agreement has been concluded and will be laid very soon.

## WAGES AND GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

Mr. J. CALDWELL (Mid Lanark): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (1) whether the Admiralty have yet completed their investigations into the complaint against the Clyde Bridge Steel Works and Moss End Steel Works (who supply steel plates for Government contracts), of not only employing non-union men and paying less than trade union rate of wages, but of refusing to employ trades union labour, and dismissing men because they belonged to their trade society; and (2) whether the complainers will, if need be, have an opportunity of still further substantiating their statements?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): (1) The allegations contained in a letter from Mr. Cronin have been referred in the usual course to the principal contractors, who have called upon the subcontractors mentioned for explanations. These gentlemen positively deny the accuracy of the statements made. (2) The Admiralty are willing to receive any further statement from the complainants.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why Government contracts still remain with firms who fail to comply with the spirit of the Resolution of the House of Commons as regards sub-letting and fair wages, passed in 1891 and renewed in 1893?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: I am not aware that there are any firms holding contracts from the Stationery Office that have failed to comply with the spirit of the Resolution of 1891; but, of course, the Controller has not the same power of dealing with contracts which were in existence at the time of the passing of the Resolution and have not yet expired as he has in dealing with contracts granted since that date. The contracts referred to will all expire in 1896, and the question of future arrangements as regards printing and binding will be brought before the Select Committee, which will be appointed after Easter.

Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) did not understand that the question was wholly confined to the Stationery Office. He desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Treasury had received representations from their own workmen at the Deptford yard that the Resolution of the House was not carried out.

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: I have nothing to do with the yard at Deptford; I have quite enough to do without that.

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether, though Dr. Flynn, Local Government Board Inspector, reported to him that acute or exceptional distress does not exist in Claremorris Union, portions of it, such as Murneen, Cultebo, Kilvine, Ballindine, Aughamore, and Ballyhaunis, are very poor and distressed, he is aware that a portion of Aughamore is in Swinford Union, and is a most congested district; (2) whether he has been informed that the priests who were anxiously awaiting Dr. Flynn's visit did not know that he had been through Murneen and Aughamore; (3) whether he is aware that in Knock South all the people have applied for seed, that this is a congested division, that out-door relief is always high, that the potatoes totally failed, that the people have no stock, that roads are much wanted, that the people go thence to Kiltimagh, eight miles to and from, to get employment at 7s. per week; (4) whether Dr. Flynn saw in Drum Townland a family with nine children, having a large holding without a four-footed beast, and whose only food was Indian meal; and in the Townland of Coogna the inspector did not see even one beast or a pit of potatoes; (5) whether he is aware that the people followed the inspector into Ballyhaunis asking for work at any wages to save their families from starvation; and (6) whether, seeing the general distrust of Dr. Flynn's Report, he will have an inspection made at once by some other inspector?

*MR. J. MORLEY: (1) It would appear from the inspector's reports that while there are a number of poor persons in Claremorris Union at the present time, there is nothing approaching to general or widespread destitution, and the resources of the poor law are so far able to deal with any cases of distress that exist. Aughamore Electoral Division referred to in the question is in Swinford Union, and works have been opened there. (2) The inspector, Dr. Flynn, during his inspection, which lasted fully a week, met and conferred with several clergymen and members of the Board of Guardians. (3) The Local Government Board are not aware whether all the people applied for seed potatoes in Knock South Electoral Division, but they state that the Guardians proposed to give a supply to 104 families. (4) Individual cases of poverty such as that mentioned in the Townland of Drum will, unhappily, be found in the west of Ireland even in years of comparative plenty, but such cases are exceptional, and may be relieved by the existing law. (5) The inspector states that it is not a fact that any persons followed him into Ballyhaunis asking for work to save their families from starvation. (6) The Local Government Board have had conferences with Dr. Flynn about this district, and also with the inspector who had charge of it for many years and who recently reported on the Union. The Board do not think at present any necessity for opening relief works can be shown to exist. They have, however, required the inspector to frequently visit the district, and there appear to be no sufficient grounds for directing another inspector to make a further inspection and report.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would get the inspector to pay more careful attention to the difference between out-door relief in different districts. In some districts out-door relief was 1s. 6d. on a high valuation, and in other districts it was 40s. on a low valuation?

MR. J. MORLEY: I pay as much attention to these matters as I think they require. So far as out-door relief for this union is concerned, no doubt there are a great many divisions where out-door relief is much increased on what it was before; but taking the Union as a whole, there are 300 fewer cases than in the corresponding period of last year. I can assure my hon. Friend that I have kept as close an observation on those cases, as far as one can from London, and in any case I have perfect confidence in the officials.

MR. J. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received a copy of the resolution, adopted by the Bawnboy Board of Guardians at their last meeting, and the report made by their acting relieving officer that in the divisions of Cloverhill and Garradice, in South Leitrim, he found 96 families in deep distress, many of them without fuel and clothing, and all of them willing to work; and whether he can state if relief works have been started in these distressed districts?

MR. J. MORLEY: A copy of the resolution in question has been received. I stated in reply to the somewhat similar question addressed to me on Thursday last, that relief works have been opened for the people of these divisions; that some 29 persons from Cloverhill have been placed on the list for employment on the works; and that the inspector has been instructed to visit and report on the other portions of the unions in which works have not been opened.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the inspector whom he promised he would send to Tuam has yet made his report, and if any relief works have been started in the Tuam Union?

MR. J. MORLEY: The report of the inspector was duly received by me, but the Local Government Board do not consider that the condition and circumstances of the people in this union are such as to render necessary the opening of relief works.

MR. J. REDMOND: On behalf of Colonel Nolan, I beg to ask the Chief

Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received reports that distress exists in the Glenamaddy Union; and if he has commenced any relief works in the Barony of Ballymore?

MR. J. MORLEY: Representations have been received alleging the existence of distress in various parts of this Union, and these have formed the subject of investigation by the Local Government Board's Inspector. The Board inform me that they have been unable to find any evidence of the existence of abnormal distress in the Union, and no relief works have consequently been opened.

MR. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the death from exposure and cold of Cornelius Rudden in the mountain pass between Donagh and the Illies, in Donegal, on the 28th February, and to the finding of the jury as to the necessity for a road at the place; and whether he will direct an inquiry as to the traffic and to the possibility of finding means to make or aid in making such a road?

*MR. J. MORLEY: I have received a report of the occurrence referred to. There is no distress in the locality such as to justify the construction of a road at this place as a relief work, but I shall refer the matter to the Congested Districts Board for further inquiry.

MR. J. REDMOND: On behalf of Colonel Nolan, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if any assessment made on account of payment towards the cost of the Suck Drainage can be appealed from, particularly as to the size of the area on which the assessment is made; and if, in the case of small holders of land, the Board of Works will postpone levies during this year of distress?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: The Acts under which the Board of Works make final awards in cases like the Suck Arterial Drainage do not provide for appeal. No undue pressure will be used in collecting instalments from small holders of land.

## PILOT AND DISTRESS SIGNALS.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the account of the proceedings at the Board of Trade inquiry into the stranding of the steamship *Waldridge*, as appearing in the *Shipping Gazette* of the 8th inst., when two lives were lost, and the vessel became a total wreck, and particularly to the evidence of the captain that he did everything he could to show distress signals; to the evidence of Samuel Bradshaw, the chief boatman at the Staithes Coastguard Station, that he saw the signals, and thought the *Waldridge* was signalling for a pilot, and that his opinion was shared by other members of his crew; and the evidence of Charles Horn, boatswain of the Staithes lifeboat, that he took the lights from the steamer as being signals for a pilot; whether he has seen the account in the *Kentish Express* of 11th August last, and the *Shipping Gazette* of 7th September and 26th November last, of the useless launching of lifeboats at Littlestone, Broadstairs, Kingsdown, Dungeness, and many other places along the coast, in response to signals intended to be for a pilot, but which were mistaken on shore for signals of distress; and whether, in view of these frequent occurrences and misunderstandings, leading sometimes to loss of life, he will take steps to enable the Committee on the Rule of the Road at Sea to take evidence upon the matter, with a view to International action; or if not, what action he proposes to take in the matter?

MR. J. BRYCE: My attention has been called to the circumstances referred to in the question put on the 15th of March; but, as I have already stated to the House in reply to a question, I am advised that the Regulations provide sufficiently distinctive signals to be used respectively when a pilot is required and when a vessel is in distress. If, as in the case of the *Waldridge*, the wrong signals are used, mistakes naturally arise, but I do not think that it is the fault of the Regulations. The present Pilot and Distress Signals are International. They have been in force for many years and have worked well, and I see no occasion for referring them to a Select Committee. The Committee, which the House on Monday last determined to appoint, is to deal with a totally different matter.

## BELLEVILLE BOILERS.

Sir. G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what number of Belleville boilers or installations are fitted in the *Sharpshooter*, and are they the same in make, design and specification as those to be placed in the *Powerful* and *Terrible*, and to be used in the new cruisers to be laid down this year; what have been the nature and extent of the sea-going trials to which the boilers of the *Sharpshooter* have been submitted; the period in time, and the distance of the longest continuous steaming trial she has undergone; the average speed maintained thereon; also the total number of hours she has steamed since she was fitted with these boilers, and what defects have been reported, if any, and what number of tubes have been removed for repairs or replacement; and what is the cause of the prolonged detention of the steamer in harbour at Gibraltar?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: (1) There are eight Belleville Boilers in the *Sharpshooter*. The boilers for the *Powerful* and *Terrible*, and for the new first and second class cruisers to be laid down this year are the same in make and design as the *Sharpshooter's*. (2) The sea-going trials have numbered 13. The shortest trial was the usual three hours' commissioning; the longest of 30 hours. The longest in time was one of 30 hours at over 93 per cent. of her natural draught power; during that time she steamed 480 knots, at an average speed of 16 knots. The boilers of the ship have been in use since February, 1894, but the exact number of hours cannot be given at present, as the vessel is away from England. There have been no defects of any kind reported, and no tubes have been removed for repairs or replacement. (3) The only cause of any detention at Gibraltar was a defect in the machinery, and not in the Belleville Boilers. The *Sharpshooter* is now at sea, cruising with the Channel Squadron.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked, whether the Government proposed to make any trial of these boilers in vessels intermediate in size between the *Sharpshooter* and the *Powerful* and *Terrible*?

Mr. ROBERTSON: In time, no doubt, it will be done.

## SIR EDWARD HERTSLET.

Mr. GRÆME WHITELAW (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the Librarian at the Foreign Office has exceeded the age at which retirement becomes compulsory; and, if so, when did he attain it; if he, whilst still retaining the post, is in receipt of a pension; and, if so, when was it granted him; if he has received the whole or any part of the salary attached to the office since he was awarded his pension; and how long the present arrangement is likely to last?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: Sir Edward Hertslet attained the age of 70 on 3rd February, 1894. From that date he retired from the established Civil Service, and was awarded a pension of £666 13s. 4d., being two-thirds of the salary of his office. In view of a representation from the Secretary of State that the loss of Sir E. Hertslet's services at that date would result in very serious loss to the Foreign Office and to the Public Service, the Treasury sanctioned a temporary arrangement under which the officer will continue to act as librarian until 2nd February 1896. During this period he will receive such temporary rate of remuneration as will, together with the pension earned by him, equal the amount of his former salary, namely, £1,000 per annum.

## AUXILIARY POSTMEN.

Mr. KILBRIDE: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. D. Sheehy) I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether unestablished or auxiliary postmen are entitled to any pension or compensation; whether men of 15 years' service and over are entitled to good conduct stripes, or, in lieu, any other concession; whether such men, walking the full length of their post on week days and also on Sundays, will be granted the alternate Sunday rest, having regard to the hopes held out on this question in March 1893, and still in abeyance; and whether they will be granted a fortnight's vacation annually, also sick leave on medical certificate, and boot allowance?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: An unestablished postman, in the technical sense, is, as a rule, a postman ineligible on grounds of age or otherwise for an established appointment, but doing a full day's work. He is allowed uniform, two-thirds pay for six months during sickness, with medical attendance free of charge wherever there is an official doctor, a fortnight's annual leave, relief from duty on alternate Sundays, and extra pay for Sunday work. He is not, however, eligible for good conduct stripes or pension. An auxiliary postman is a postman who performs short duties only, and does not give his whole time to the service. Auxiliaries have no claim to pension, and are not entitled to good-conduct stripes and the other privileges which are reserved for the regular or full-duty staff. Auxiliary town and rural postmen are supplied with uniform clothing, and all those town postmen who perform a double duty, occupying them from four to six hours on week days, are relieved from duty on alternate Sundays. Auxiliary rural postmen are relieved from duty, as a rule, on every alternate Sunday, when their daily walk amounts to as much as 12 miles or their hours of attendance are such as prevent them from attending divine service.

## LAND PURCHASE IN IRELAND.

Mr. KILBRIDE: On behalf of Mr. D. Sheehy, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether tenants who are not present tenants are entitled to receive advances from the Land Purchase Commission for the purchase of their holdings; and whether, in the case of a future tenant applying for such an advance, the landlord may, in order to enable him to obtain it, establish him as a present tenant, and thereby admit numbers of persons not qualified to take advantage of the Land Purchase Acts to the prejudice of those for whose benefit the Act was passed?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Any tenant in occupation of a holding under a contract of tenancy may enter into an agreement to purchase his holding under the Land Purchase Acts. No question, therefore, arises as to whether the applicant is a leaseholder or a "present" or "future" tenant.

## COLONIAL MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government

will permit the Inter-Departmental Committee which is considering the question of the Military Contribution from Singapore, Hong Kong, &c., to receive evidence from the taxpayers of those Colonies; whether he can state the exact terms of the question or questions submitted to the Committee for its consideration; or, in the alternative, state if the Committee, in assessing the contributions, will be required to ascertain what amount each Colony is able to pay for such purpose, without intefering with its own general progress, necessary public works, education, &c.; who are the members of the Committee; and to whom should communications be addressed?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: When the Military Contribution of a Colony has to be referred for Report to a Committee consisting of representatives of the Treasury, the War Office, and the Colonial Office, the Colonial Governments supply, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the most ample and exhaustive statement of their views on the question, and also the views of the Colonial public as expressed in the local press, in Memorials, and in public meetings. In addition, the Committee has before it the arguments adduced by the Colonial Associations in this country. It is not considered desirable that the Committee should receive the private views of individual Colonists except through the usual official channels. The Committee is required to review the whole of the facts and statements bearing on the question, including the financial condition and prospects of the Colony concerned, and to submit its conclusions to the Government, which finally decides upon the change, if any, which should be made in the contribution. All communications on the subject should be addressed to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

## GAS CYLINDERS.

Mr. F. A. NEWDIGATE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the explosion of a gas cylinder charged with chlorate of potash, which recently occurred at Fenchurch Street Station, causing the death of John Holbrook; and whether steps can be taken to have cylinders that are used for such purposes properly tested and duly stamped, so that their strength may be known by the users?

MR. ASQUITH: I have inquired into this matter, and am advised that scientific opinion differs as to whether the bursting of these cylinders is due to the pressure of oxygen upon an imperfectly welded steel tube, or to traces of impure substances present in the oxygen. I propose to refer this matter for the opinion of two or three distinguished experts on such matters.

## ARMENIA.

MR. L. P. HAYDEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Galway (Colonel J. P. NOLAN) I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if our Ambassador at Constantinople has demanded, or will be instructed to demand, from the Porte, a nominal roll of all officers and men who were stationed at or near the scene of the alleged butcheries of the Armenian women and children; and if the Porte will be requested to take steps to prevent the escape of such officers and men until their individual responsibility can be more fully investigated?

MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): Before answering the question, may I ask the hon. Baronet whether the Government will not instruct our Ambassador at Constantinople, and also our Delegate with the Sassoon Commission to searchingly inquire whether the instructions sent to the officers who directed and controlled the horrible occurrences referred to in the question did not emanate direct from the Porte, as the correspondents in Armenia of various well-informed journals appear to assert no later than to-day?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have not received the statement to which my hon. Friend refers, nor did I know he was going to ask a question. I must ask him to put the question on the Paper. In answer to the question on the Paper, I have to say that the Ambassadors at Constantinople are kept constantly informed of the proceedings of the Commission, and I can only repeat that they will spare no effort to secure, through the delegates, that the inquiry is effective and the results of it satisfactory.

## THE NILE VALLEY.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign affairs—(1) whether he will lay upon the table of the House all or any Papers in which Her Majesty's Government conveyed to the French Government the intimation that the Valley of the Nile between the Lakes and the Southern Frontier of Egypt is within the sphere of British influence; (2) whether, if this information was conveyed to the French Government, he will lay upon the Table of the House the reply (if any) of that Government to that intimation; (3) whether he can state what is the Western Frontier of this sphere of influence; (4) whether the *de facto* Government of the Soudan (by such term being understood that portion of the Soudan under the sway of the Mahdi) is recognised by Her Majesty's Government as a Government, or whether those comprising it are deemed rebels to the Khedive of Egypt; (5) and whether he is aware that a large portion of the Valley of the Nile between the Lakes and the Southern Frontier of Egypt is within the dominions of the Sultan of Turkey, and whether that Sovereign admits that this country has any rights, territorial or otherwise, over it?

SIR E. GREY: The points referred to in the first two paragraphs, and our position with regard to them, have been the subject of discussion with the French Government last year. The discussions did not reach a definite conclusion, but they have not been broken off, and no Papers with regard to them can be laid at present. The Western limit of the British sphere of influence is defined in Article 1 of the Agreement with Germany of July 1, 1890. Her Majesty's Government cannot recognise the Government of the Mahdi, or of his successor, as in any way ousting or disparaging the rights of Egypt in those territories. In answer to the last paragraph, I must refer the hon Member to Page 4 of Africa No. 4, 1894, where it is declared that Her Majesty's Government do not ignore the claims of Turkey and Egypt in the basin of the Upper Nile.

## NEW INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL AT LEEDS.

Mr. E. F. VESEY KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the proposal of the Leeds School Board to erect a girls' Industrial School at the expense of the ratepayers 15 miles from Leeds, and at the same time to refuse to pay for any further children to Catholic Industrial Schools, and to remove those Leeds Catholic children who are now in Catholic Industrial Schools to the new Industrial Schools; whether he is aware that the site proposed for the School Board's school is four miles distant from from the nearest Catholic Church; what will be the provision made for the religious teaching at the proposed school of children belonging to those denominations which do not consider the School Board religion satisfactory; and, whether he will refuse to sanction the project unless provision is made for the liberty of belief of children drawn from the large Catholic population of Leeds?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have carefully considered this proposal, which was discussed in all its aspects at an interview between the members of the School Board and myself last week. Both sides were represented, and their conflicting views were ably and thoroughly presented. The statement in the second paragraph appears to be inaccurate. I am informed that the distance has been measured, and has been proved to be not more than 1¾ miles. After weighing the arguments which were addressed to me I have come to the conclusion that I ought to sanction the proposal of the School Board, which is supported by 14 out of 15 members. From the assurance given to me, I am satisfied that proper provision will be made for giving Roman Catholic teaching to the Roman Catholic children, but I shall take care that the interests of the Roman Catholic population concerned are amply safeguarded.

## THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF STOKESTOWN UNION.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he is aware that Dr. Dillon, medical officer of Stokestown Union, and recently appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Roscommon, in a charge of assault brought by the Queen at the prosecution of Patrick M'Laughlin against Francis M'Laughlin and Michael M'Laughlin, was called in and professionally employed to attend Patrick M'Laughlin, the prosecutor; that the defendants were obliged to pay Dr. Dillon £2 for a certificate that the life of the prosecutor was not in danger before they got out on bail; that Dr. Dillon afterwards, on the 1st August, attended as a magistrate at Rooskey Petty Sessions, in the county of Roscommon, at the hearing of the said complaint and adjudicated upon it. notwithstanding the protest of the solicitor for the defence that he should not do so, being an interested party who had been in prefessional attendance for a reward upon the prosecutor; and that Dr. Dillon refused to leave the Bench, and took an active interest in the proceedings, saying that he did not care for the protest of the solicitor, and adjudicated with the other magistrates in the case, when the defendants were fined £4 and costs! and, whether, seeing that the Chief Secretary has stated that it would be improper for a magistrate to adjudicate in a case in which he had been professionally engaged, and promised to bring the matter under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, he has done so, and what is the result?

Mr. M. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, I wish to ask whether the same question was not asked last year; and whether a question containing imputations on the same medical gentleman was put last Friday and found to be utterly without foundation?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I believe there was such a question last year; but I cannot carry all the questions in my mind. The Lord Chancellor in August last had a correspondence with Dr. Dillon on the subject of this question. Dr. Dillon stated he had received a fee of £2 for giving the certificate, but that he had acted as a magistrate with *bonâ fides* and quite impartially. The Lord Chancellor, while accepting Dr. Dillon's statement, pointed out that his action left his conduct open to serious misinterpretation, and required that he would not again take part as a magistrate in any case in which he had been in any way professionally engaged.

## THE PROPOSED HARBOUR WORKS AT DOVER.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the proposed harbour works at Dover at once; and, if so, when will they submit their scheme to Parliament?

MR. A. B. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) asked whether there would be any objection to refer the plans and designs of the new harbour works, which would cost something like £9,000,000, to the consideration of a Select Committee?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The new Dover Harbour is not included in the Bill as it stands at present; but full explanations as to the works proposed will be given when the Bill comes on for discussion.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the hon. Gentleman tell me when the Bill will come on for discussion?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I hope to bring it in on Tuesday week.

## THE CASE OF GEORGE NEWMAN.

MR. VESEY KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has yet come to any decision in the case of George Newman; and, whether, having regard to this and similar cases, the Government will aid in the passing of the Bill to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal?

MR. ASQUITH: I am in communication with the learned Judge who presided at Newman's trial, upon this case, which is at present under his consideration. I have always been, and am, in favour of the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal; and without pledging myself or the Government to the details of the Bill to which my hon. Friend refers, I may say that we should be glad to give to its promoters such assistance as is in our power.

## THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES CONTRACT.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether his attention has been further drawn to the contract for publishing Parliamentary Debates, and to the fact that the words "connected with the composition, printing, and binding" do not appear in both the tender and the contract, and, whether he can explain how this has occurred.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I do not think I have anything to add to my reply to my hon. Friend's question on Thursday last. It is quite true that the precise words do not appear in both the tender and the contract, but the sense and the intention are exactly the same in both. Both tender and contract say that the contractor—

> "shall be at liberty to obtain his reports from such sources as he may think most convenient."

As regards sub-letting, the tender (subject, of course, to the foregoing provision), says—

> "The contractor shall not underlet any work to be done under this contract without the written consent of the Controller."

The contract merely specifies in more legal words precisely the same conditions as are provided for in the tender.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Arising out of that answer, I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will be good enough to peruse the two documents I have in my hand, one being a tender in which the words alleged do not occur, the other being a contract under which this firm is now operating, in which the words do occur. I further wish to ask him if he comes to the conclusion that he has been grossly misled—for nobody doubts the uprightness, courtesy, and sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman—whether he will take immediate steps to have this matter thoroughly and fully investigated, so that those public officials who introduced into a public document, after it passed this House, certain words altering the entire tenour of the contract, and thus brought disgrace on the best and greatest public service, may be summarily dealt with?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I must protest against the language used. I am not in the least afraid of having this question ventilated and discussed in this House, and I am surprised if the hon. Gentleman thought that the mode in which this question has been treated deserved such language that he did not bring it forward on the Vote on Account when it was before the House on Friday. I venture to say that any impartial person looking at the tender and the contract would say that, though they are not in exactly the same words, they are exactly the same in intention. There would have been no necessity for a special contract being entered into with Messrs. Waterlow had it not been that the Treasury, for the purpose of protecting themselves, inserted a clause with the condition that they might have the power at the end of one year or two years to terminate the contract.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that this contract would have been undertaken by other contractors at some £500 less had those words not been introduced.

*SIR J. HIBBERT: That is not correct. I am sorry to say there has been a great amount of exaggeration and mis-statement on this question in several public papers. Any tenderer could have tendered in exactly the same way as Messrs. Waterlow, as all had the same tenders presented to them, and there would have been no contract necessary if it had not been for the insertion of the condition I have read. I know that the whole of these statements are directed against the arrangements which are made by Messrs. Waterlow for the reporting, which is done by *The Times* staff. Now I may tell my hon. Friend that, in addition to Messrs. Waterlow, there were further tenderers who applied to *The Times* proprietors to enable them to utilise the staff of that newspaper. That shows that there was no advantage given to Messrs. Waterlow, and if the tender of any other firm had been accepted they would practically have had the chance of utilising *The Times* staff exactly in the same way as Messrs. Waterlow.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): After the statement the right hon. Gentleman has just read I would ask him whether he is aware that two of the principal firms out of five tendering absolutely deny that view of the case. I would ask him, further, whether he is correctly reported in *The Times* newspaper of February 15, to have stated as follows:—

> "The Treasury were not aware of the fact that the present contractors intended to sublet part of the contract. To do so is quite contrary to the contract."
>
> *Sir John Hibbert.*

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that, I ask him whether he has not observed a remarkable improvement in the reports since the new arrangement was made?

*SIR J. HIBBERT: In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy, I do not think I used the words he has quoted. The Treasury were not aware that Messrs. Waterlow would make arrangements for the reporting with *The Times* newspaper. I never used the word contract, but I said that there had been no sub-letting, but that what had been done with regard to the reporting had been done by arrangement between *The Times* and Messrs. Waterlow. In reply to my hon. Friend opposite, I may say that, under the present system, instead of having the services of seven gentlemen reporting in the gallery, we have under the new arrangement, the services of 16 gentlemen who report for *The Times* newspaper, and I venture to say the reports now furnished are as correct, as rapid, and quite as good as, if not better than, any which have been furnished previously.

MR. DALZIEL: May I ask him, in view of his statement, which is a denial of the truth of *The Times* report, whether the right hon. Gentleman disputes the accuracy of *The Times*?

*SIR J. HIBBERT: What I dispute is, that I used those words. I have always said that I was not aware that it was intended to make such an arrangement, and I always said in answer to my hon. Friend, that there had been no sub-letting, but that there had been an arrangement between *The Times* and Messrs. Waterlow as to the reporting.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY: Arising out of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as to this question not being brought on when the Vote on Account was under discussion, may I ask whether it is not the fact that the Vote on Account was closured?

*SIR J. HIBBERT: It was closured at Twelve minutes to Seven o'clock.

MR. BARTLEY: But it was closured.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): By universal consent.

MR. BARTLEY: The fact remains that it was closured.

MR. W. FIELD: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, are we to understand that the words complained of as being inserted subsequently in the tender were there inserted subsequently by officials after the form of the tender had passed this House?

*Sir J. HIBBERT: My hon. Friend mistakes his own case. The same tenders were sent to every person wishing to tender as were sent to Messrs. Waterlow. The tender of Messrs. Waterlow was accepted; the tender was then handed over to the Solicitor to the Treasury to carry out the contract, and, instead of using the exact words of the tender, he used more legal words, in order to protect the Treasury.

Mr. VESEY KNOX: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will let us see the letters which have passed between Messrs. Waterlow and *The Times*, in order that we may judge whether or not there has been a subcontract?

*Sir J. HIBBERT: I have not possession of the letters. These are entirely a matter between Messrs. Waterlow and *The Times*, and I do not think it necessary to call for them.

Mr. KNOX: How is the right hon. Gentleman to spot sub-contracting if he does not ask the contractor to allow him to see the letters which may constitute the sub-contracting?

*Sir J. HIBBERT: Those words show this—that Messrs. Waterlow were at perfect liberty to employ either *The Times* reporters or the reporters of any other newspaper, or any persons outside a newspaper. Both the contract and the tender say they are at liberty to obtain the report from such sources as they may find most convenient.

## PETITIONS AGAINST THE WELSH DISESTABLISHMENT BILL.

Mr. J. AIRD (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Chairman of the Select Committee of Public Petitions if he can inform the House the number of Petitions up to date against the Welsh Disestablishment Bill; and if possible, the number of Petitioners, and, if the same information can be given as regards the Petitions in favour of the Bill?

Sir C. DALRYMPLE (Ipswich): The number of Petitions presented against the Established Church (Wales) Bill up to date is 1,024, containing 204,560 signatures. No Petitions have been presented in favour of the Bill.

Mr. AIRD: May I ask the hon. Gentleman if the return made includes Wales, and if, therefore, we may take it that no Petition has been received from Wales in favour of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill?

Sir C. DALRYMPLE: I cannot add to the answer I have given.

Mr. REES DAVIES (Pembrokeshire), asked if it was not the fact that a very large number of the signatures were illiterates.

[No reply was given.]

## CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS.

Mr. J. A. M. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether an assistant clerk in the Civil Service who obtains promotion to the next higher grade suffers thereby a loss of salary; and whether it would in many cases involve a service of over 15 years in the higher grade before the clerk's salary reached its old level; if so, whether he proposes to take any steps to remedy this anomaly?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: There is no direct promotion from the class of abstractors or assistant clerks, and there is no next higher grade. An abstractor, like any body else, may be appointed to the second division, but if so, he must, by the provisions of the Order in Council of the 21st March, 1890, commence at a salary of £70. No person has been appointed to the second division at so advanced an age as to render possible the loss of salary mentioned in the second paragraph of the question, and it is very unlikely that such an appointment could take place. I am not prepared to recommend an alteration of the Order in Council at present, but whenever the time for generally reviewing its provisions arrives, that now in question will be considered with the rest.

## THE INDIAN ARMY.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the 51 officers who entered the Indian Army in the transition period 1859–61, called Officers of the General List, who entered the Local Service under the option given them by a Government Order in 1861, and who by official declaration down to 1865 were placed on the same footings as the other officers in the Local Service, who have nevertheless been deprived of the privilege of entering the Staff Corps from the Local Service, although other Local Service Officers retained that privilege, are not allowed to take their Majorities and Colonelcies until they have had 20 and 26 years' service respectively, and in 1882, by fresh pension rules, were differentiated from other Local Service Officers, deprived of the right of Colonel's allowances after 12 years' service as Lieutenant Colonel (which right was assured to them by the Royal Warrant of June, 1864), and granted inferior pensions to those of their brother officers in the Local Service; whether any explanation has been given for the distinction drawn between the two bodies of officers who had elected for Local Service, although other officers who went at the same time from the General List to the other two branches of service, viz., Staff Corps and General Service, have been treated exactly on the same terms as their brother officers in those respective services; whether this question has been repeatedly brought before the Secretary of State; what is the present position of the question; and is it probable that any satisfaction will be given at an early date to the grievances of these 51 officers?

**Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL**: The case of the officers of the General List has been considered by successive Secretaries of State, who have never admitted that these officers, who were appointed after the Government of India had been taken over by the Crown, had the same rights as officers of the Local Service appointed prior to that date. The question was discussed in the House of Commons on the 8th June, 1888, and since then has been considered by Lord Kimberley and by the present Secretary of State, who saw no ground for disturbing the previous decisions. The Secretary of State is not prepared to re-open the case.

### SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

**Mr. W. J. MAXWELL** (Dumfriesshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland who fixes the date of the first statutory meeting of a Landward Committee, and whose duty it is to summon

the meeting; and, whether it is the Parish Council or the Landward Committee which appoints the representative on a District Committee in the case of a parish which comprises a police burgh or part thereof, and a parish which is partly landward and partly burghal, and which also comprises a police burgh or part thereof?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The first Statutory Meeting of a Landward Committee should be held upon the same day as the Statutory Meeting of the Parish Council, and should be summoned by the Inspector of Poor, just as in the case of the Parish Council. As regards the latter part of the question, it is the Parish Council which appoints in the first alternative put, and the Landward Committee in the second.

### THE BANK AND CONSOLS.

**Viscount CURZON** (Bucks, Wycombe): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any Act of Parliament authorises the Bank of England to refuse to transfer Consols on a general power of attorney; and, if not, what is the authority under which the Bank acts in so refusing; does it cover all or any other stock inscribed in this country; and what are the proper means whereby the attorney of an absent holder of Consols can be authorised to sell, at his discretion from time to time, any unascertained amount, or number of amounts, in order to avoid loss to or secure gain for the owner, or to carry out any other object?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: The Bank of England rely on Sections 22 and 24 of the National Debt Act of 1870. As Stocks inscribed at the Bank of England (like Consols) are transferable without certificates, special precautions have to be taken against anything likely to lead to fraudulent transfers.

### MONEY-LENDING.

**Mr. YERBURGH**: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the recent revelations of the grave abuses connected with the present system of usury, and with the practices of money-lenders in England, Wales, and Ireland; and whether, in the interests of the agricultural, trading, and working classes, who furnish the greatest number of victims, the Government will advise the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole subject?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Like my hon. Friend I am very conscious of the mischief produced by money-lenders upon all classes of society, but I doubt very much whether any Royal Commission will ever prevent money-lenders from making victims of people who want money.

Mr. YERBURGH: Do I gather, then, that the right hon. Gentleman will not grant the Royal Commission I ask?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Well, Sir, I will consider the matter, but I confess I am not sanguine about it.

### SAVINGS BANKS.

Mr. G. HOWELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the last paragraph but one of the Third Report of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks (page 26), in which a comparison is purported to be drawn between the Post Office Savings Bank and the Trustee Savings Banks, to the disparagement of the former; whether secresy is maintained in the Trustee Savings Banks and not in connection with the Post Office Savings Bank; and, whether the facilities of withdrawals are greater in the Trustee Savings Banks than with the Post Office Savings Bank.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I do not understand the Report to intend to disparage the Post Office Savings Bank as compared with the Trustee Banks, a thing for which there would be no justification. The secresy of the accounts of a depositor in both banks is the same. In some respects the facilities for withdrawal are greater, and in some respects less, in one Bank than the other.

### UGANDA.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the arrangements between the Treasury and the Imperial British East Africa Company, consideration has been had to the possibility of a claim for compensation for damage to Roman Catholic interests during the time when Uganda was in the hands of the Company being sustained?

Sir W. HARCOURT: The subject of the claims in question being part of the discussion with France, it has not been thought possible to include the amount of such claims in the settlement with the East Africa Company.

### THE MONETARY CONFERENCE.

Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Mid Tipperary): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is aware that the Australian Colonies and New Zealand are anxious to be represented at the approaching Monetary Conference; and whether it will be possible to arrange for direct Colonial representation at the Conference; if not, whether he will, in appointing the British delegates, take into consideration the propriety of nominating at least one gentleman who will be competent to voice the opinions of the Colonies on the questions to be discussed?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Her Majesty's Government have received no intimation of an approaching Monetary Conference, and the question of any arrangement with reference thereto has therefore not arisen.

### MARGARINE.

Mr. G. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that packages and baskets of margarine are frequently imported with only a detachable tin or parchment label to designate their contents; and whether that is in conformity with Section 6 of the Margarine Act, which enacts that every package containing margarine shall be branded and durably marked; if not, will he instruct the Customs Authorities to detain any parcels of margarine that do not conform to the provisions of the Margarine Act, 1887?

Sir W. HARCOURT: The Board of Customs are advised that the Margarine Act, 1887, imposes no duty on their officers with regard to importations of margarine marked in the manner decribed in the question. Their powers are limited to the taking of samples under Section 8 of the Act.

### THE EASTER RECESS.

Mr. H. C. F. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, in view of the convenience to Members in making arrangements for the Easter Recess, he could give any intimation as to the probable extent of the Recess?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I hope it may be possible for the House to rise on Wednesday, the 10th April, and the Government would then propose that it should meet again on Monday, the 22nd. I must make this statement, however, subject to reserve in case of necessity for future alteration.

## THE COURSE OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman has been good enough to give us a satisfactory statement about the holidays. Could he tell the House what the programme of business is between now and that date?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir. What I understand is, that to-morrow my right hon. Friend, the Secretary for Ireland, will proceed with the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill. I hope on Monday next—that is, this day week—to ask leave of the House to introduce the Bill relating to the Local Veto. And I should hope that on the Tuesday, the day before the proposed rising of the House, that we might be able to ask the House to read a second time the Loan Bill in reference to the Navy. It is very desirable that that Bill should be read a second time before the holidays in order to authorise the going on with the works. Also I should hope that we might be able, on the Monday or the Tuesday, to take the Second Reading of the Factories and Workshops Bill, so that when the House meets again, the Bill may go at once to the Grand Committee, if that will be a convenient arrangement. I should hope that that will dispose generally of the business between now and the holidays.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) hoped sufficient time would be given for the discussion of points that would be raised on the Factories Bill.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I should hope that either on Monday or Tuesday time will be found quite sufficient for Gentlemen to express their views on that subject.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked if he correctly understood the right hon. Gentleman to mean that on Thursday and Friday of this week he thought that there would be time for the Irish Land Bill.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The Irish Land Bill will be proceeded with until the Second Reading.

Mr. COSMO BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could give the House some pledge that a Second Reading Debate would be given to the Liquor Traffic (Local Veto) Bill.

Sir W. HARCOURT: After the holidays?

Mr. BONSOR: Yes, after the holidays.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Oh, certainly! I am glad to know the hon. Gentleman is so anxious about it. I will do everything I can to gratify the hon. Member.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I think the calculation of the right hon. Gentleman is based on the assumption that the discussion on the First Reading of the Local Veto Bill will take only one night. Is that so?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes. It was done so before, and I do not know why it should not be so again. I should imagine the House would be glad to see the Bill.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: If the right hon. Gentleman is so sanguine, perhaps I should leave the matter there, but I was going to ask if the Debate should go on beyond one night, will it make any difference in the right hon. Gentleman's arrangements?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Of course it will make a difference in my arrangements.

Sir D. MACFARLANE asked if it was the intention of the Government to introduce the Crofters Bill before Easter, as promised.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I should be very glad if time could be found before Easter to lay the Bill for County Government in Scotland before the House and the country. As regards the Crofters Bill, I am equally prepared to introduce that Bill, but I am sorry to say I cannot make time for it.

Sir D. MACFARLANE: If the Secretary for Scotland cannot make time for it, perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer could?

Sir W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot.

## SUCK DRAINAGE SCHEME.

Colonel NOLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if any assessment made on account of payments towards the cost of the Suck Drainage can be appealed from, particularly as to the size of the area on which the assessment is made; and, if, in the case of small holders of land, the Board of Works will postpone levies during this year of distress?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: The Acts under which the Board of Works make final Awards in cases like the Suck Arterial Drainage do not provide for appeal. No undue pressure will be used in collecting instalments from small holders of land.

## SUSPENSION OF THE TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE.

On Motion of Sir W. Harcourt, the House resolved, *nem. con.* :—

" That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Established Church (Wales) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve of the clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order Sittings of the House."

## ROYAL PATRIOTIC FUND.

Ordered,—That the Select Committee on Royal Patriotic Fund do consist of Seventeen Members.

Ordered,—That Mr. Cochrane and Mr. Egerton Allen be added to the Committee.—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)*

## METROPOLITAN POLICE (RECEIVER) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to make Provision for the Temporary Absence of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 188.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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## ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [21st March] " That the Bill be now read a second time"; and which Amendment was, to leave out the word " now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words, " upon this day six months."—*(Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.)*

Question again proposed, " That the word 'now' stand part of the question."

Debate resumed.

*Sir J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, that when the Debate was interrupted on Tuesday night he had finished what he had to say on the subject of Disestablishment. He had shown that injustice would be inflicted on Welshmen who were members of the Church by the destruction of the organisation of their religious community, and he had pointed out that modern establishments did not affect anybody who was not a member of the Church. He had also called attention to the fact that none of the speakers on the opposite side, with the single exception of the Home Secretary, had pointed to any incident of Establishment which interfered with persons outside the Church. The Home Secretary stated that the legal enforcement of tithe was an incident of Establishment. He thought what the right hon. Gentleman meant to say was, that the Establishment of the Church by law had accounted historically for the transmutation of the voluntary payment of tithe into a legal obligation. But inasmuch as tithe was enforced in the same way when it belonged to a private individual, and would be enforced by law after the Bill passed just as it was now, he did not think the payment of tithe could be said to be an incident of modern Church Establishment. Proceeding to deal with Disendowment, he said he regarded that question as by far the less important part of the Bill. He agreed with hon. Members opposite that you could not permanently injure a religious communion by taking away its property. But Disendowment was none the less an injustice to Welshmen, and especially to poor Welshmen, who were members of the Church. He believed the principle upon which Parliament should proceed in regard to Church property was that embodied in the Act of 1844, which gave Nonconformist bodies the right to their chapels—namely, that prescription, and not a very long presciption, should, in the absence of any other evidence, give any religious body the title to its property. But whether the property of the Church in Wales was originally a voluntary gift, as the Home Secretary argued, which had grown gradually by prescription into a legal right, or whether it was a grant from the owners of land, as it certainly was in the case quoted by the right hon. Member for Bristol, it was, at any rate, undisputed that by a prescription of more than two centuries the property which the Bill proposed to take away from the Church in Wales had been held and used, and, according to the confession of the Government, was now being properly and effectively used, for the purposes for which it was originally either given or granted. The Ecclesiastical Corporations in Wales were the trustees of that property; the people beneficially interested in it were the members of the Church at large, which comprised, in theory at least, the whole population of the parish; and there could be no doubt that the purposes to which the property was to be applied were spiritual purposes. What moral right had Parliament to divert funds left for such purposes to the secular purposes described in the Bill? There were, no doubt, precedents for the diversion of ecclesiastical funds to secular purposes, but in modern days Parliament had certainly never gone so far as to divert funds, which admittedly were being used for excellent and good purposes, to purposes, excellent perhaps in themselves, but differing *in toto* from the objects for which the property was originally given. The only answer given to that by the supporters of the Bill was that the majority of the Welsh people wished this diversion of the property of the Church. But surely it was not held that a majority in any part of the kingdom could dictate to the minority there. If it could have been pointed out, as might have been done a century ago, that the trustees of the property were unfaithful to their trust, then a good case might have been made out—not for the confiscation of the property, but for changing the trustees. The hon. Member for Edinburgh gave an extraordinary reason for the diversion of this property. He said there were in the Church many wealthy men who could easily replace by their gifts the property which was to be taken away. He did not know whether a Bill of this kind would be very likely to encourage benevolent persons to make grants or donations for spiritual purposes. But even if it did, what right had Parliament to take away that which the poor enjoyed, not as a privilege but as a right, merely because there was a prospect of its being replaced through the liberality of others? Concluding, he said he regretted that the time of Parliament should be taken up by a measure of mere destruction like this. The President of the Board of Trade, who was to follow him, was the head of a Department which claimed to be specially charged with social questions. He wished the right hon. Gentleman was going to recommend some measure which would confer further benefits upon the people, or protect them against some of the evils to which they were subject. In these days the Government should build up and not pull down, and he regretted that the principal measure of the Session should be one directed against an institution which the Home Secretary admitted to be even now rendering great services to the people, and which was full of immense possibility of future improvement.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, that before addressing himself to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, he desired to deal with one or two controversial questions of fact that had arisen in the course of the Debate. The first of these related to some criticisms that were made on the figures given by the Home Secretary in his speech in moving the Second Reading of the Bill. His right hon. Friend had stated that in Wales there were, in the Sunday schools of the Church of England, 145,000 children, while in the Nonconformist Sunday schools there were 515,000 children. The Bishop of St. Asaph in *The Times* newspaper disputed the correctness of these statements and alleged that the number of children in Nonconformist schools had been overstated by 80,000, and suggested that the Home Secretary had been led into an error by having included the children who were in the Nonconformist Welsh schools in England. His right hon. Friend informed him that he had had the figures carefully re-examined and verified, and that they were perfectly correct; they included no children in Welsh Nonconformist Sunday schools in England, and included the schools of six Welsh denominations of Nonconformists—Calvinistic Methodists, Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, and Bible Christians. He would now come to the other charge of inaccuracy brought against his right hon. Friend, viz.: as regarded the number of parishes which did not possess a resident clergyman. The Bishop of St. Asaph had said that at the present time the Established Church provided in every parish in Wales a resident minister; that in nearly half of the parishes Nonconformity had not made any provision for a resident minister; and that in over 1,000 parishes the Nonconformists had only 520 resident ministers. His right hon. Friend, with the view of showing the inaccuracy of that statement, took the case of the county of Anglesey, and stated that out of 76 parishes there there were 27 in which there was no resident clergyman of the Established Church. The Bishop of St. Asaph contradicted that statement in *The Times* newspaper, and the Bishop of Bangor, within whose diocese the county of Anglesey lay, and who, possessing a closer knowledge, had also a greater caution, though he reduced the number, disputed to some slight extent his right hon. Friend's figures. The Bishop of Bangor admitted that there were 19 parishes, although he denied that there were 27 in Anglesey in which there were no resident clergymen of the Church of England, stating that these 19 had been grouped with 19 other parishes for ecclesiastical purposes. Having made further inquiries his right hon. Friend found that his number, 27, was entirely correct, and that if anything it was rather an understatement than an overstatement of the number of parishes in Anglesey without a resident clergyman of the Church of England. His right hon. Friend believed he had overestimated the amount of tithe which accrued in these 27 parishes, but, apart from that, he maintained that his statement was entirely correct. The Bishop of Bangor had said that probably many of these parishes were thinly peopled, and had, therefore, been grouped, as was both economical and proper. He might have added as a further reason that the majority of the population was in most cases Nonconformist. But, if the Church of England was to be permitted to group parishes, why were not the Nonconformists to do so too, and what became of the contrast which the right rev. Prelate had in the first instance endeavoured to draw between the Church of England, with resident ministers in every parish, and the Nonconformists, who, he said, made no similar provision? It ought to be remembered, too, that most of the Nonconformist denominations discharged a good deal of their pastoral work by elders and deacons. He now came to a statement made by the right hon. Member for the University of Dublin, who complained of some observations that fell from him in a previous Debate as to what was done in regard to the compensation of curates under the Irish Church Act. The right hon. Gentleman with warmth, and he might even say harshness—which was the more surprising, in that his speeches generally gave no less pleasure to the House by the geniality of their tone than by their refined and graceful eloquence—had accused him of trumping up a case, and asked what foundation he had for his statement in regard to the curates. The statement was perfectly correct. He had referred to the Debate of 1875, to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded, and found that the Debate arose out of the charges made against the Irish Church Commissioners, and only to the smallest possible extent did the question at issue then turn upon the curates. The question of the curates was in no sense judged or settled by that Debate, and the right hon. Gentleman's recollection had misled him as to the effect and meaning of the decision taken.

Mr. DAVID PLUNKET (Dublin University) said, he had a recollection of the Debate in question, and the report in "Hansard" was a very brief one. The question turned upon the clergymen as well as on the Commissioners.

*Mr. BRYCE said, if the report was defective, the right hon. Gentleman must not complain of his not reading into that report of the Debate something which was not there. It was the right hon. Gentleman who had himself referred to the Debate, and he (Mr. Bryce) could do no more than study it in

"Hansard." But the House had got better materials to turn to than that Debate. If hon. Members would read with care the Report of the Irish Church Commissioners, published in 1876, after the Debate which had been referred to, they would there find enough to enable them to understand the whole matter. He would give the House one or two facts which would enable them to see what took place. The Irish Church Bill of 1869, as brought in, provided a certain scheme of compensation, under which the then Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for Midlothian, estimated that the compensation payable to permanent curates would not exceed £800,000. The Bill was transformed in the House of Lords by a clause under which that compensation swelled to about £1,600,000. Deduction was not to be made from the income of an incumbent in respect of the salary of any curate who was not a permanent curate, and yet the Bill contained a loophole under which incumbents, after the passing of the Act, received curates who claimed and obtained compensation as permanent curates; thus the number of curates ordained rose rapidly, and thus, in point of fact, in not a few cases the compensation was paid twice over in respect to the same curate under that Bill. He had the pleasure of knowing the two Irish Church Commissioners, and whoever knew them knew them to be most able and upright men. The complaint he brought was in no sense against them, but was entirely against the provisions of the Act, because it was under those lax provisions of the Act that this system of exaggerated compensation became possible. And, whereas, the number of permanent curates who were in the Established Church of Ireland in the summer of 1869, at the time when the Act was passed, was only 563, it had swollen by the 1st of January, 1871, to 764—*i.e.*, it had increased by about 35 per cent.—and that difference, together with the laxity with which compensation was given under the machinery provided by the Act, represented what the Irish Church revenues had to lose as regards curates alone in respect of the unfortunate changes which were made in the Bill, and, he would say, the unfortunate attempt to provide compensation for curates at all. He therefore repeated that the compensation scheme under the Irish Church Act of 1869 was a very grave and serious warning to them not to enter again upon any such slippery path, and not to attempt to provide a plan of compensation to curates. From this minor point he would now pass to the general question. The right hon. Gentlemen (Mr. Plunket) had not denied that the Disestablished Irish Church had suffered infinitely less from Disestablishment and Disendowment than was expected in 1869. He had not even differed from the views expressed by his distinguished brother the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin as to the positive strength which that Church had in some respects gained by her freedom from State connection. In this point those who feared for the Established Church in Wales might take courage. But he must say something more as to the parallel between the two cases. What had been the grounds put forward for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church in 1869? They were four—she was the Church of a minority; she was the cause of social bitterness and political strife; she was regarded with aversion—and with all the more aversion because she was a proselytising Church—by a large number of the people of Ireland; and a majority of the Irish people, through their representatives, demanded her Disestablishment and Disendowment. Let them compare that case with the case of Wales. In Wales they had a Church which was the Church of a minority; which was, undoubtedly, the cause of social bitterness and political strife; which was regarded with aversion—and he feared all the more so because she had latterly begun to proselytise—not for one moment because she was a Christian body, but merely because she was a source of political and social dissension; and, lastly, Disestablishment and Disendowment were demanded by a large majority of the Welsh people. It was demanded by a much larger majority of the representatives of Wales than was the case in Ireland. He had referred to the Irish figures, and he found that on the Second Reading of the Irish Church

Disestablishment Bill 99 Irish Members voted. Of these, 63 voted for the Bill and 36 voted against it—that was to say, less than two-thirds of the Irish Members voted for the Bill. In the Division which would take place that night, if the Welsh Members were able to be present, they would have 31 out of 34 in favour of the Bill, or nine-tenths of the Welsh representation in that House. They had, therefore, a far larger and a more unanimous demand on the part of the people of Wales, speaking through their representatives, than they had in the case of Ireland. These were the grounds for their action. He supposed no one seriously disputed that the Welsh Members represented the opinion of the Welsh people. A Bill had been introduced into that House by a Scotch Member proposing that a sort of plebiscite should be taken in Scotland on the question of whether the Scotch Church should be Disestablished, but no one proposed that for Wales, because everyone knew perfectly well that a proposal of that sort would only elicit an overwhelming majority in favour of this Bill. It was said they had entered upon this as a piece of political opportunism. He would say for himself that there had never been a time when he had not thought their first duty towards Wales was to Disestablish the Established Church. And he would like to ask the House to consider what was the position in which a popular demand like this placed the Legislature of the country. Where the persons affected, the persons who knew the state of the case, the persons who suffered for what they considered an evil, were asking them by growing majorities, and by majorities which had now reached nine-tenths of the Parliamentary representation, to do away with the evils, how was it possible for them as a constitutional Government to refuse to listen to them? What would become of, he would not say Liberal principles, but of the very elementary principles of representative Government, if a demand preferred in that way by a distinct section of the country was not listened to? He thought this furnished an unanswerable *prima facie* case, and if the matter ended there no one could doubt for a moment that the House of Commons was bound at once to take up the question and was bound to gratify the demand of Wales. He would be told that there were serious objections. This was a very grave question, which opened up many principles that were not commonly discussed in that House, and it was necessary that they should try if they could to get at the very bottom of the question. He would, therefore, try to state fairly what he believed to be the arguments on which hon. Gentlemen opposite relied in answer to the *prima facie* case he had sought to put forward. The first, he thought, was that Disestabment would prejudicially affect the Church of England; the second was that Disestablishment and Disendowment were robbery, if not sacrilege: and the third was, that the establishment of religion was a good thing in itself, and it strengthened religion as a moral force, and it was a rampart against infidelity and immorality, and that it might be said, in some sense, to consecrate and dignify the State. He would try to examine each of these propositions. As regarded injury to the Church of England, he had asked in the previous Debate, and had received no answer then or in this Debate, in what respect any individual layman or individual clergyman of the Church of England would suffer by the passing of this Bill. No one had been able to tell him what harm in mind, body, or estate, secular or ecclesiastical, would be suffered by any clergyman or layman of the Church of England. It could not be said that either her doctrine or discipline was touched by the Bill. Her spiritual communion would remain as it was now. Church Congresses, into which far more than in Convocation, the real living life and sentiments of the Church now flowed, would continue to meet for the whole of the Church of England and Wales; the clergy would be reciprocally eligible for the benefits of the bishoprics, and the same communion, in fact, would exist between England and Wales that existed now between the Church of England and the Church of Ireland, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in any of our colonies. He would like to read to the House a very striking passage from Cardinal Newman. It was in the Appendix to the once famous Tract No. 90, in which he dealt with the question of the relation of dioceses to one another. He said :—

> "Each diocese is a perfect, independent church, sufficient for itself; and the communion of Christians one with another, and the unity of them altogether, lie not in a mutual understanding, intercourse, and combination, not in what they do in common, but in what they are and have in common, in the possession of the succession, their episcopal form, their apostolical faith, and the use of the Sacraments."

Upon that authority he put to the House what, indeed, he thought everyone who looked into the nature of the Church in its true constitution must feel, that nothing was done that affected in any way the spiritual constitution of the Church of England or her communion with the Church of Wales, because it was in her spiritual life, in her doctrine and discipline, in her administration of the Sacraments, and the existence in her of a sacerdotal body, and not in State control or State connection, that the essence of spiritual communion lay. It was said the Church of England would be more threatened if this Bill passed. Why should she be in any more danger than she was to-day? The same thing was said in the case of Ireland, but as soon as the two or three years after the Disestablishment of the Irish Church had passed no more threats were heard against the Church of England, and her position was not any more assailed than before Irish Disestablishment. The Disestablishment of the Irish Church had not in any way led to the proposal to disestablish the Church in Wales This movement in Wales had become important within the last 10 years. The Disestablishment of the Irish Church lay 26 years behind. That which had brought about the movement in Wales was not the precedent of Ireland, but the fact that the circumstances were similar in the cases of Wales and Ireland. And if the Disestablishment of the Church of England were, as was alleged, the object of the promoters of this Bill, he greatly doubted whether they were going the best way to attain it. They were removing that which had long been the chief grievance against the Church of England. They were removing that which had been the least defensible outwork of the Church of England, and they were also carrying away from the ranks of those who were called, though he did not admit the name, assailants of the Church of England the most active body, because they were carrying away those persons who at present suffered the most for the existence of an Established Church, which was the Church of the minority. It was said, further, that the arguments they had advanced were all arguments in favour of Disestablishment in general. He did not deny, and he could not deny, that arguments which turned upon the nature and constitution of a Church must be arguments which applied to Disestablishment everywhere. It was impossible it could be otherwise. But when they came to consider not the Church, but the State; if they came to look not to the spiritual nature of the Church, but to the country and the people among whom a particular Church existed—they were obliged to apply those general considerations which related to the nature of the Church with a due regard to the circumstances of the particular country, and the minds and temperament of the people. So regarding it, there was no evidence that the people of England had even thought much about this question, much less that they had made up their minds upon it. If the state of facts changed, if the minds of the English people did awaken to this question, and they came to the conclusion, as the Welsh people had concluded, that they would be better without an Established Church, and if, like the Welsh people, thay demanded that with the voice of the majority of their Representatives they would then have the question put before them in a practical form. When that time came the question would be dealt with on its own merits, and not on the precedent of Wales. The arguments which would be cited, and which would have weight then, would be arguments to which the case of Wales would not make any substantial difference. He came for a moment to speak of the question of Endowments. The chief point which had been canvassed in their discussions had been the right of the State to deal with Endowments which the Established Church enjoyed. He would remind the House that this property, which was spoken of as if it were the property of the Church, was not the property of that corporation called the Church as a whole. If it were property, it appeared to him to be in the nature of an Endowment, of which the various corporations in the aggregate were trustees for the people of the parishes or for the people of the dioceses. But be that as it might it was not property in any sense of any large corporation, but of a number of small corporations scattered over the country. How did that property originate? Was there any one who could doubt that that property was given by the State? If there was any one he would refer him to the book of the greatest living authority on constitutional history in England, Bishop Stubbs, who said :—

> "The recognition of legal obligation of tithes dates from the eighth century both on the Continent and in England. In A.D. 779 Charles the Great ordained that every one should pay tithes, and that the proceeds should be disposed of by the Bishop, and in 789 it was made imperative by the Legatine Councils held in England, which, being attended by the Kings and Ealdormen, had the authority of Witenagemots. From that time it was enforced by not infrequent legislation. Almost all the laws issued after the death of Afred contain some mention of it. The legislation of Edgar is somewhat minute on the subject."

Although Lord Selborne differed slightly from Bishop Stubbs as to some of the documents relied on, several of which Lord Selborne seemed to consider unauthoritative—he did not think Lord Selborne's views with regard to tithe substantially differed from those contained in the passage he had just read. Lord Selborne frankly admitted that the laws of Edgar and Canute distinctly recognised the legal obligation of tithe. To pay tithe had become before the Norman Conquest a distinct legal obligation on the donor, and there was nothing better settled in the 11th and 12th Centuries than that it was so. The fact that it originated from the teaching of the clergy and a false analogy drawn from the Mosaic law, the fact that it was recognised by custom before law enforced it, did not affect the indisputable fact that tithe in the 11th and 12th Centuries was a legal obligation imposed by the State. What conclusion could they draw from that except that tithe was bestowed by the nation? It was said that particular parishes received it in many cases from an individual donor. As Dr. Stubbs said, during a certain period it was left to the tithe payer's option to what Church he should make his payment. But the parish churches did not receive it as the freewill offering of an individual donor, for the individual donor was already bound to pay tithe, and the most that he could be held to have done was to have attached payment of his tithe to one particular Church rather than to another; in other words, he had a certain option in appropriation, but no option in making the payment. That being so, it was impossible to regard tithes as the private gifts of ancient donors whose wishes should not be disturbed. They were gifts made by the State which had devoted a certain tax to a particular purpose, and we were as free now as the State had been in the 10th Century and again in the 16th Century to deal with the property which the State had given. Even supposing, however, that tithes were deemed the gift of private donors, and that Parliament was now to endeavour to determine their proper destination by an examination of what the intentions of the donors were, whether those donors were private persons or the nation of that day, could they attribute to such donors the prescience which would look forward for many centuries? What could they take to be their intent? Was it to give the property to the Church either in respect of its doctrine or of its being a visible body. If given in respect of its doctrine, what had become of the doctrines of the Catholic Church of the 12th Century? Many of these gifts were given to churches dedicated to particular saints who had the devotion of the donors. But what had become of the Invocation of Saints? These gifts were given to a Church which was in communion with the see of Rome, which was the only visible body to which gifts could then be given, and the only religious organisation which then existed for the promotion of learning, science, philanthropy, for the care of the poor and all those public objects for which no other philanthropic association could then exist, a body to which every one must then belong, outside of which no religious or charitable work would have been then allowed to be done, and outside of which any one who attempted to work would have been promptly stopped and compelled to conform or desist. What right had we to assume that the donors of the 11th or 12th Centuries would have given their property to a Church which was not now co-extensive with the Nation, which was the Church of the minority, which so far from being the only channel through which the spiritual and philanthropic life of the people flowed, now saw beside it other religious bodies and other philanthropic agencies which would not then have been tolerated, but which had to-day as much, if not more, claim to represent the spiritual life of the people? Since the Toleration Act of 1689, and the other legislation which marked the epoch of the Revolotion, the Established Church had passed from being co-extensive with the nation into being virtually only a denomination, and something entirely different from the Church of the Middle Ages and the Tudor Epoch. This was what made it right and necessary to draw a line between the ancient and the comparatively recent endowments. It was now the same only in name. The Established Church was no longer the National Church in the old sense, for it was not now, and had not for a long time been the only body to which any endowments that were given must be given. When endowments could be bestowed on any denomination of Christians, a gift to the Church of England became, by hypothesis, a gift to it in respect of its special claims and by the preference of the donor, just as gifts to a particular Nonconformist body would be. Thus the arguments which proved the right of Parliament to dispose freely of ancient endowments were not equally applicable to modern endowments, and Parliament would be transgressing its own principles if it did not draw a distinction, and say that the very reasons which induced it to attach respect to and carry out the intention of donors as to modern endowments so far as it deemed their purposes useful, and suited to our times, had no application to ancient endowments. He might say, in passing, that it was a mistake to suppose that Nonconformist endowments were, in the main, endowments given for the benefit of particular congregations. They were not so, at least in the case of some of the leading denominations. They had been mainly given for the benefit of such institutions as colleges and seminaries; and a comparatively small part of them were, at least in such bodies as the Independents, gifts for the support of a particular Church in a particular parish. He did not think, however, that anyone who would look at the Ecclesiastical Legislation of the 16th Century would feel the least doubt in saying that the principles on which Parliament proceeded then—and which had never been repudiated by subsequent Parliaments—went a great deal further than it was proposed by this Bill that Parliament should go now. Take the chantries. They were foundations given for the saying of masses for the souls of the founders or their nearest relatives. But these had been done away with. Masses were shortly afterwards altogether forbidden, and the object dearest to the heart of the founder had been swept away. Surely far greater violence was done to the wish of the founder when endowments of that kind were taken; surely the powers exercised in the suppression both of the chantries and the monasteries did much greater violence to the religious feelings of those times than any it was proposed to do now. He passed to the last of the three arguments on which the Bill was opposed—the idea that an Established Church lent a certain sanctity to the State and was a more powerful religious influence to grapple with infidelity, immorality, and what was called the spirit of secularism, than a free and voluntary Church could be. On this point there were profound differences of opinion between Members of the House. It was a topic hard to discuss within those walls, but the assumption that the connection of Church and State strengthened the one and sanctified the other had evidently so much influence on the minds of many persons, and had been so distinctly put forward by many speakers, and particularly by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, that he must face it, and endeavour to show how groundless it was. He would try to find one common ground, at any rate, between them, in asking hon. Members to remember what was the teaching of the New Testament. There was certainly no thought of Establishment or Endowment there. The ministers of Primitive Christianity were supported by the free gifts of those whom they taught, and the Apostle Paul, although he maintained that he had a right to be supported by his converts, was careful to remind them in one

Epistle that he had supported himself. The New Testament, however, implicitly, and yet distinctly, laid down the relations which the Church ought to bear to the State. In the New Testament the Church was a divine society which lived by the law of love and devotion to her Divine Founder. There was in the teaching of the Gospel an absolute disclaimer of any relations at all between the Church, as an organised society, and the State:—

> "Render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's, and unto God the things that be God's."

There was an absolute disclaimer of any pretension to secular authority, or of any use of law or force to require obedience or secure a secular advantage. "My Kingdom is not of this world." That primitive Church was Unendowed and Unestablished, but in the teeth of the Roman State and against its repeated persecutions she overspread the world and overcame the world by her own inherent power. There was an established worship in those days. There was the worship of the Emperor or his genius, a worship common to the whole Roman world, a worship to which all heathens, whatever their special deities, to which the worshippers of Jupiter or Astarte or Serapis or Alilat, were willing to conform. Only the Christians refused to conform; and for this the martyrs died. Then there came an hour of trial, the hour of triumph and prosperity. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, on the first night of the Debate, had appealed to history, and asked whether we were to disregard the whole practice of the Christian world from the days of Constantine down to very recent times. The right hon. Gentleman did well to appeal to history. In a grave matter like this, which raised fundamental principles, they were quite right in seeking to gather all the light they could from the teachings of history. But what were the teachings of history? The House would, perhaps, permit him to refer to a legend that was long current in the Middle Ages. On the day when Constantine—according to a fable which was believed for many centuries, and had vast political influence——endowed Pope Sylvester, as Chief Pastor of the Church, with worldly power and great possessions, it was reported that an angel was seen to appear in the sky, who cried with a loud voice—

> "This day poison is poured out on the Church."

That legend was evidence of what many thoughtful people in the Middle Ages felt to have been the result of endowing the Church with wealth and power. The poison of secular power and riches was soon felt, and, within a century, from the time of Constantine a Church enthroned by the Civil Government had begun to persecute, and religious dissension had lit up the flames of war. What had been the subsequent experience of the alliance or the union between Church and State? It had secularised the Church; it had turned bishops into worldly potentates and corrupted them by the pursuit of riches; it had made them too often the ministers of tyranny and the agents of cruel persecutions; it had checked the free development of thought, it had given rise to many an insurrection and many a long and sanguinary war. Surveying the whole history of that union, the general result was that, the richer and the more powerful the Church became, and the more closely she was held in the fatal embraces of the State, the more did she forget her Master and his teaching. But had the State been benefited? The right hon. Member for West Bristol had admitted that the Church might have lost something by its connection with the State; but he said the State had been the gainer. The identification of the State with the Church had brought into politics dissensions and strifes which might otherwise have been avoided. It had led to wars and rebellions, it had forced the State to persecute and to repress the expression of opinion in religious matters; it had helped to set class against class; it had left us a legacy of social bitterness which remained to this day. So far from exexhibiting the influence of Christianity in their conduct, those States with which the Church was most closely allied were just those which had shown the least respect for truth, and peace, and freedom. Look at Spain, under Philip the Second, and France in the time of Louis XIV., and judge how much the enthronement of religion had done for those countries. The

Church, in close alliance with the State, lost the power of being, as she ought to be, the conscience and the moral guide of the State. He might be asked how, if this long continued union of the civil and spiritual powers were really a mistake, it could have happened that all Christendom entered upon, and persisted in a line of policy condemned by its result. It happened because it was universally assumed, when Christianity became the general and dominant religion, that all men would agree to it and accept it that it was the duty of the civil power to compel all men to embrace the truth, and that the civil power itself possessed the truth, that truth being sometimes definite and certain, which nothing but moral obliquity could prevent men from embracing. These assumptions were natural, and, perhaps, inevitable in the then state of the world. They prevailed for 13 centuries from the time of Constantine down to the days of our own civil war; and if they had now been abandoned it was because men had come to regard agreement upon religious truth obtained by force as not only humiliating to the man who submitted to it, but also not pleasing to God. They now knew that men will not agree on religious questions, and few of them, excepting those who belonged to a Church which claimed to be infallible, would venture to claim that they were in possession of a truth so certain as to justify its enforcement or promotion by the secular arm. Upon the assumed possession of truth by the State was based the ancient union of Church and State and the claim of the civil magistrate to persecute. The absolute identity of the civil and the religious societies, the idea that all citizens were therewith also members of the Church was, no doubt, a grand and noble conception; never more nobly stated than by Richard Hooker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," at the very time that the rise of English Puritanism was rendering the realisation of the idea impossible here in England. But if historical experience taught us anything, it was that agreement in religious opinions would never be realised in such a world as the present. The experience to which the Member for West Bristol appealed, was the experience of the failure of efforts to apply principles now long ago renounced in Western Europe, and remaining only in Russia. The foundation being gone, what was the use of trying to prop up the superstructure; Established Churches, as they survived among us now, were but a pale and feeble shadow of what they had been four centuries ago, free, no doubt, from the worst faults that had then deformed them, but without that solid basis on which they then stood firm. From this remote and unhappy part he would appeal to a living present. While 34 millions lived in these islands under a system of Church Establishment, nearly 80 millions of English-speaking people lived in other countries without Establishment. In those countries the churches were as numerous as here; they were as well appointed; the pastors were generally better paid; the sums raised for other purposes than the support of the ministers were relatively as large as here; there was little or no jealousy between religious sects; religious differences were not intruded into politics; and the clergy were as influential and as much respected as here. In Canada and the United States, he knew that the clergy were fully as potent and trusted in their proper sphere as they were in this country, and they were as prominent in every good work, such, for instance, as attacking municipal misrule and corruption. There had been many prelates in the Church of England during this century eminent by their talents and virtues, but none so admired and followed in his life, none so widely and deeply mourned at his death, as a bishop of an unestablished church—Dr. Phillips Brooks, the late bishop of Massachussets. The experience of these English speaking communities showed, as the history of the Primitive Church showed, that religon can thrive and the State can be strengthened by religion in an atmosphere of perfect freedom. The religious character of the State, and true recognition of Christianity by the State did not consist in paying the Church the homage of establishing her by law, but it consisted in making justice and humanity the base and rule of our conduct at home and abroad. The Establishment was no more the Church than the husk was the grain. Did the right hon. Member for Dublin University think that the ancient walls and solemn associations of our cathedrals appealed less to Christians because they did not belong to an Established Church. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Bristol, spoke as if all who did not belong to the Established Church were necessarily its enemies. No man could live in England and be a good citizen and a Christian without feeling the deepest interest in the welfare and prosperity of the English Church. He had himself been brought up in another country and another branch of the Catholic Church, but seeing in the Church of England the oldest and largest of all the Christian communities in this country, recognising that she included the largest part of its learning, and of those who, by their intellectual gifts, and their social influence, as well as by zeal and earnestness, were able to advance the cause of religion and make it a blessing to the nation, he claimed to be as deeply and truly concerned in her welfare as any one of her own members. The right hon. Member for West Bristol had spoken of a wave of secularism passing over the world. He doubted that if Secularism were more openly avowed than formerly, he did not believe it was more widespread, and if individual selfishness was strong, there was also never a time when Christians had thrown more zeal and ardour into every effort and enterprise which looked to the good of others. But of one thing he was sure. If this were a time when the influenee of the Christian spirit was specially needed to resist the forces of evil, the true way to strengthen that influence and to re-invigorate the Church in Wales was to set her free from worldly entanglement, and to bid her, remembering her glorious youth to rely no longer upon the privileges and gifts of the State, but upon the faith which she teaches and the Divine commission she has received.

**Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN** (St. George's Hanover Square): The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, spoke of the veneration which we feel for the Established Church in this country, of its dignity, its power, and its influence. It is because we do entertain these feelings we do not desire to see the Church broken up into factions. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman has impressed me, as other Ministerial speeches have done, with the total inadequacy of motive for disestablishing the Church in Wales, and the manner in which the arguments relating to the case before us are applied to the Established Church in England. Yet we are told we are not to regard this Bill as a precedent. But we do regard this as the issue involved. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman is as much an attack upon the Church of England as upon the Church in Wales. To a certain extent he has brought in the Home Rule argument: 33 Members for Wales demand it, and therefore it must be. That plea I shall be prepared to examine; but let it be clearly seen that the case of the Church in Wales is put as differing entirely from that of the Church in Ireland, and that this is avowedly an attack upon the Church of England.

***Mr. BRYCE**: I expressly disclaimed anything of the kind, and said that, although it was impossible to avoid dealing with the general ecclesiastical arguments that had been advanced, the case of Wales was distinct altogether from that of the Church of England.

**Mr. GOSCHEN**: Nine-tenths of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman had nothing to do with the details of this question, but bore upon Church Establishment in general. What did the right hon. Gentleman say—a Minister —who spoke on this Bill? He said:—

> "I have welcomed the fact that everyone who has taken part in this Debate has agreed to treat the Welsh Church as a subject that cannot be profitably treated without reference to its relation to the Church of England."

All the arguments which have been adduced have been the arguments of Voluntaryism as against Establishment; but the arguments here are totally different from those employed in the case of the Irish Church. ["No, no?"] I am going to prove it. The right hon. Gentleman said that the precedent of the Irish Church must not be used with regard to the Welsh, and therefore the precedent of the Welsh Church could not be used in regard to the Church of England; but the hon. Member for Bedford said that it would be, and that has been stated by a greater man than anyone who sits upon these Benches now—the right hon. Member for Midlothian himself. He said that the ties which bound the Church in Wales to the Church of England were so close that it was almost impossible to separate the two. Does the mediæval history which the right hon. Gentleman gave us just now illustrate at all the work of the Church of England to-day? Let me, as one of those who were present in the Irish Church Debates, and who took part in those Debates—a part which I do not shrink now from avowing, and which I do not regret to have taken—let me recall to the House the difference of the circumstances between the two cases, the difference of the strength of the motives which prompted the one and which seem now to be prompting the other. We did not undertake the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland at the dictation of the Irish Members. The Irish Members were not so strong in the House then as they are now. Here is a resolution passed in Dublin before the Church was disestablished:—

> "We demand the Disendowment of the Established Church in Ireland as a condition without which social peace and stability generally, respect for the laws, and unity of sentiment and action for national objects can never prevail in Ireland."

Do hon. Gentlemen opposite maintain that social peace in Wales depends upon the passing of this Bill? Then Home Rule has reached a pretty point. Is Wales to be another Ireland? Hon. Members cannot be aware what a crisis there was in Ireland at that time. They cannot be aware of the political dangers which threatened the country. We felt that we had at that time a tremendous issue before us. We knew perfectly well the reproaches we should incur; but it appeared to us that we must be prepared to be judged by events; it appeared to us right to attempt to heal a breach, which had been widened into hatred almost in the course of centuries, by what we well knew was a national sacrifice, but which we regarded as a peace-offering by this country to Ireland at that time. That was the view we took, and it was taken by members of the Church of England and by the majority of the constituencies; but we knew perfectly well the gravity of the situation. I must say to my hon. Friends behind me that we knew that a greater sacrifice could never be asked of a Protestant people than that, for the sake of conciliation, they should sacrifice the Established Church of Ireland as an Establishment in order to reconcile a Roman Catholic population. Protestant feeling was strong in this country, but still it was thought proper, as an act of justice, to make that sacrifice. The race hatred which existed in Ireland then, I am happy to say, does not exist in Wales. There have not been those bloody revolutions in the case of Wales which alienated members of the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church. It was a question in Ireland of creed and race, and to say that the same circumstances exist in Wales now is to say what no statesman of that day would have been prepared to admit, and least of all the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian himself. We made the sacrifice in the case of the Irish Church. I admit that the sacrifice has been made in vain. I wish I could say that that which was intended as an act of conciliation had conciliated the irreconcilables.

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL: It was for the sake of the Church itself.

MR. GOSCHEN: It was not for the sake of the Church itself. We had not the hypocrisy that some of the advocates of Disestablishment now have. We did not say it was for the good of the Church that we wished to disestablish it. That was not the argument put forward. The argument was, that Disestablishment was to be an act of conciliation to Ireland. As such it was regarded, and as such, I fear, it has unfortunately failed. But it has not entirely failed. At all events there are some of us—I am one, and I frankly admit it—who can go forward with a lighter heart and with more assured step, and with deeper convictions, as Unionists, for the act in which we took part. I say that, when the chequered annals of this country are weighed in the scale by a passionless posterity, or even before a higher tribunal, I believe the act to which we were parties will not be reckoned to us as a national sin, but as a national sacrifice. The course we took with regard to the Irish Church was not prompted by Voluntaryism or the good of the Church itself; but, if I may use the phrase, to buy peace; and, in these circumstances, how was it treated by the Nation? It was not treated by the Nation as a small question, it was not discussed in an empty House, nor as a question which should be taken up in order to assist in "filling up the cup." It was not sandwiched between other measures. It was not mixed with a Local Veto Bill. There was no confusion of issues. What we did at all events we were prepared to submit to the Nation. There was a General Election at which this was the only great issue; and when the Government say those who voted for Disestablishment in Ireland ought to support them now according to the Irish precedent, I reply, let them follow the Irish precedent, have a Dissolution, and give the people a chance of voting on the question of Welsh Disestablishment. Now, I wish to point out, because this is a very important matter, to what extent those who were engaged in the Irish Church struggle admit that there was any reference whatever to the Church with any analogy which could be drawn with regard to the Church of England. Here I would wish to put my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian in the witness-box. He drew a sharp distinction between the two cases. What did the right hon. Gentleman say?—

> "It is quite impossible to compare the severance between the Established Church and the Nonconformists in Wales with the severance between the members of the Irish Establishment and the Roman Catholics in that country. Not only upon theological grounds, but also on the ground of actual sympathy or hostility of sentiment, the whole history of the case is entirely different. There was a strong and sharp antagonism between the Established Church and Roman Catholic Church running through Ireland, and that ecclesiastical antagonism was embittered and complicated by intermixture of political questions even graver than the ecclesiastical controversies of the country, so that the effect of the whole was that the several portions of the population were placed almost in an attitude of standing social hostility to each other."

Then that distinguished Nonconformist statesman and politician, John Bright, spoke in that Debate. Did he make use of the occasion to deliver a speech such as we have just heard from the President of the Board of Trade? Did he dilate upon the principle of Voluntaryism? Not at all. He discussed the question from the purely Irish point of view, and said—

> "It is not because Establishments have been universally condemned throughout the country. That is not alleged at all, for though I myself have no faith in political religious Establishlishments, and believe in the voluntary principle, yet I am willing to admit—and it would be foolish not to admit—that at present a belief in the usefulness of Established Churches appears in this country to have the sanction of the majority of our people. The question is not at all whether Establishments are good in themselves or good anywhere, but whether, with regard to Ireland, the Church Establishment shall be removed."

I call the attention of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite to the following words of the right hon. Member for Midlothian, with reference to the connection between the Welsh Church and the English Church:—

> "There is really no Church of Wales. The Welsh Sees are simply four Sees held by the suffragans of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and form a portion of the province as much as any four English Sees in that province. . . . As regards the identity of these Churches, the whole system of known law, usage, and history has made them completely 'one.' . . . There is a complete ecclesiastical, constitutional, legal, and, I may add, for every practical purpose, historical, identity between the Church in Wales and the rest of the Church of England. . . . I would not say what it would be right to do provided Wales were separated from England in the same way that Ireland is, and provided that the case of Wales stood in full and complete analogy to that of Ireland in regard to religious differences. But the direct contrary of this is the truth. I think, therefore, it is practically impossible to separate the case of Wales from that of England."

Yet this is just the impossible task which right hon. Members opposite are undertaking. I admit that years afterwards the right hon. Member for Midlothian said he was profoundly impressed by the fact that 31 out of 34 Welsh Members had taken the view that the Church ought to be Disestablished; but he still dwelt upon the immense difficulties of the case, saying—

> "I suspect it will be found that the Church in Wales is tied and knotted and tangled in such a multitude of legal bonds or meshes with the general body of the Church of England, that it would be a very formidable matter, indeed, to accomplish this untying purpose."

On the subject of tithes we have had a a very learned discourse from the President of the Board of Trade, who quoted "Tract 90" in support of his views. That was rather strange.

*Mr. BRYCE: I did not quote "Tract 90" on the subject of tithes, but with reference to the relations between one diocese and another, and the true nature of spiritual communion. It had nothing to do with tithes.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, it struck us as strange that the right hon. Gentleman should quote "Tract 90" at all. He spoke with much historical knowledge on the subject of tithes, and I will, therefore refer him to an authority which I trust he will not repudiate. I again cite the right hon. Member for Midlothian, who used these remarkable words at the time of the Election in 1869—

> "These funds are local funds. The tithe of a parish was never given except for the purpose of maintaining religion in that parish, and to take the tithe out of a parish of Galway or Clare for the purpose of meeting wants of Protestant congregations in Dublin or Belfast, whatever the intention may be, is, in my opinion, very like indeed, and dangerously like, an act of public plunder."

That is where the phrase "public plunder" came from, respecting the use of which I was twitted not long ago by the Chancellor or the Exchequer. The supporters of this measure argue that, because the Irish Church has been disendowed, we are estopped from denouncing the present proposals of the Government with regard to Endowments. But the greatest care was taken in connection with the Irish Bill to excite no local cupidities. No inducement was held out that a profit would be derived by any particular locality. There was to be no relief of the poor rates, and no promise was held out of art museums, and cottages for labourers, and allotments. But in the present Bill there is a certain tendency to set the ratepayers against the revenues of the Church. Some relief has already been given to the rates by legislation. A portion of the spirit duties, irreverently called "gin money," is applied to the purposes of technical education, and now the revenues of the Church in Wales are to be handed over to the local authorities for kindred objects. Praiseworthy though those objects may be in themselves, it is not praiseworthy to promote them by wresting the funds of the Church from the purposes for which they were intended. It has been said by one hon. Member that the money would be better spent upon the objects which the Government have selected than upon "the choirs or the decoration of altars." Does the hon. Member not know that, except in cathedral towns, the choirs are nearly always kept up by voluntary effort, and that the decoration of churches also depends upon the voluntary gifts of loving Churchmen, and is not provided for out of the revenues of the Church? The liberality of Churchmen in this respect is sometimes brought up against them *in invidiam* by persons who do not know that the Dissenting communities are now vying with the Church in the decoration of their places of worship. But I do not think that Disendowment is the main objection to this Bill, for, though there might be a terrible interval after Disendowment, the money wanted by the Church would ultimately be collected. I would ask a question. The money in question is only £150,000 a year. Supposing that sum were given to the local bodies named in the Bill, would they be content? Would they accept Disendowment without Disestablishment, and if not, why not? What harm does the Establishment do? That is a question which has never been clearly answered. Hon. Members opposite always argue that Establishment fetters the Church itself; but they do not attempt to show how the existence of an Established Church affects injuriously the well-being of the Welsh people. Owing to the contagious effect of the Home Rule spirit hon. Members think it perfectly natural that they should ask for the destruction of the part of the Church of England in Wales, and that, having asked for it, that it should be conceded. I put it in this way to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Suppose that, instead of asking for the disorganisation of the Church they asked for the disorganisation of our system of finance. Suppose they said:—

> "We Welshmen want the system of finance altered. We consider that spirits are taxed much more heavily than beer. We, as a spirit-drinking nation, declare by 31 members out of 34 that we want a different system of finance, and are we to be denied what we want by the Imperial Parliament?"

Why, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not listen to them. He would say:—

> "You may disorganise the Church, but you must not disorganise our financial system"

That shows the hollowness to a great extent of the Home Rule Argument. One of the main arguments of the supporters of this Bill is that they wish to remove a yoke. They wish, they say, to take off the fetters from the Church. They do not deny the excellence of the Church in Wales. I do not think it can be denied that the Church has made great progress. I should regret if one word fell from my lips depreciating the efforts of the Nonconformist bodies in Wales, but depreciatory remarks have been made with regard to the Church in Wales. But as regards that Church, what has been said lately by the late Prime Minister? He says that it is an active Church, a living Church, a Church rising from elevation to elevation. No one can deny that, and hon. Members must see that they are endeavouring to disestablish the Church in Wales just at a time when that Church is making progress. The Church in Wales does not require to be relieved of the fetters that are said to be placed upon it. There is great confusion in the argument of hon. Members. It is said: "We require freedom in order to succeed." Who requires it? Who are the "we"? Is it the Church in Wales, or is it those who are opposed to the Church in Wales? No Churchman in Wales, whether layman or clergyman, has asked for it. No layman or clergyman has asked for greater freedom; they have not asked to be relieved from Establishment. [An hon. MEMBER: "Yes, they have."] Then let it be tested by Petition. We were told by the hon. Member opposite that the Establishment tends to make the Church hard, proud, worldly, and non-spiritual, and yet hon. Members say they do not depreciate the clergy in Wales. Are the clergy, members of the "active" Church, hard, proud, worldly, and non-spiritual? Is this the condition of the clergy in the Church in Wales? Are they in any degree less unworldly, less spiritual than the ministers of the Nonconformist Churches? I do not think that any hon. Member will dare to bring that accusation. Then we were told that the Establishment engenders greed. We were told that it engenders an unhealthy appetite for loaves and fishes. [An hon. MEMBER: "Healthy appetite!"] Is there a greater appetite for loaves and fishes among the clergy than among the Nonconformist ministers? This charge has often been brought before, as if the clergy of the Church were more anxious for the loaves and fishes than the ministers of other communions. It is an entire mistake, and, I venture to say, with a good deal of experience, that the voluntary gifts of the poor clergy out of their poor stipends—their contributions to the churches and the poor—show them to be as unselfish and as looking as little to pecuniary considerations as any other class in the community. But let me say, in conclusion, one or two words on the question of fetters, and with regard to the question whether the yoke of the State tends to minimise the good which the Church can do. And I lay this down as a broad, general proposition—that the creed of the Church is more liberal, wider, broader in every respect than the creed of almost any other rival religious denomination. The Member for East Edinburgh said that Science was making such progress, that there is so much unbelief and Agnosticism, that it was idle to bind men down to a rigid creed. Is there not a binding down even within narrower limits? I believe that the hon. Member said that he disagreed from conscientious motives, and found it impossible to remain in a certain religious belief. No community in Scotland or elsewhere is so inclusive—there is no community which stretches its arms so wide—as the Church of England. That seems to be of enormous importance when Agnosticism is making great progress. It is important that in such circumstances you should not break up an association, which is so catholic and so inclusive in its character as the Church of England. If you carried this Bill into law there might be plenty of enthusiasm, plenty of life in the Church, but it would not have that universal character which we rejoice to see in the Church of England. The Church is a body that can organise a campaign against infidelity in a manner which it would be extremely difficult to bring about if the Church were Disestablished. It is a great thing to have one great, powerful organisation ready to grapple with this difficulty, and that is an advantage that would be lost if we give the Church what is called "freedom"—a freedom that we should not get. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the Church of England as a superstructure which has lost its foundation.

*Mr. BRYCE denied that he so expressed himself. He referred, not to the Church of England, but to the theory of Establishment, and the arguments of the right hon. Member for West Bristol on the value of religious Establishments in general, and he said that to-day the ancient theory of Church Establishment had become a mere superstructure.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I do not think the right hon Gentleman has improved his position. We are not fighting for theories. We are fighting for an institution, which is not a mere superstructure, but which has as strong foundations as any in the country. I do not think that there has been any time in the history of the Church of England as an Establishment when it was stronger than it is at this moment. The Liberation Society was founded 50 years ago; and what changes in every possible respect have there not been since then? New powers have come into existence; new forces are controlling Parliament; new opinions are abroad in the country. But the Church of England stands where it did 50 years ago. It is as strong now. Its foundations are untouched, and it will require more than the arguments which hon. Members can bring forward to persuade the country to attack the Church of England itself. I say, long may it endure as a living embodiment of practical Christianity. It has really been hallowed by the traditions of many centuries; and I believe that it is as secure as ever it was of the support and the loving and living loyalty of the majority of this great people.

*Mr. A. BIRRELL (Fife, W.) said, that none of the reasons which made him an enthusiastic supporter of the Bill had as yet found expression on the lips of the preceding speakers, and that was his only reason for exhibiting an undeniable, but he hoped not an indecent, anxiety to take part in the Debate. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down would excuse him if he did not inflict upon the House those perfunctory criticisms of and probably inaccurate quotations from his speech which it was the custom of each speaker to bestow on the speech of his predecessor. Each speaker did this under the impression—which was always a mistaken impression—that he thereby induced people to believe the whole of his discourse to be of the same spontaneous character as necessarily belonged to his preliminary remarks. Whether the House liked it or not, there lay at the root of all Church Establishments two questions, which nowadays were perhaps not much discussed, and from which the House of Commons certainly very naturally and properly shrank. The first was the character of the distinctive doctrines and devotional formularies of the Church under consideration; and the second, arising out of the first, was how far such doctrines and devotional formularies could be said honestly, fairly, and beneficially to represent and embody the deep-rooted religious convictions and opinions of the people amongst whom that Church was established, and for whose benefit it was presumably maintained. All thinkers would agree that it was impossible nowadays to maintain an Establishment or to allow of its continued existence unless on one or two grounds. It might be argued, if the advocate had courage enough, and if he could find an audience prepared to give him a hearing, that the Establishment was maintained because it was the true Church—the witness of truth—and because it was the true and divinely-appointed guardian of the most sacred possession which any nation could have—its religious faith. That was a noble and intelligible belief, and a belief very generally held at one time. But circumstances had now made it impossible for such a belief to find expression in the House of Commons. Therefore, advocates of Establishments were driven to the next ground. They might say of the Established Church in question that—although everybody did not belong to it; that although it in no way represented the exact opinions of all—still that it did fairly, honestly, and beneficently represent the most deep-rooted convictions and religious opinions of the people. In this case, therefore, the question arose: Did the doctrines of the Church of England in its present mood and temper, and did the devotional formularies of that Church, fairly and beneficently represent the deep-rooted religious convictions of the Nonconformist Protestants of Wales, who were by universal consent more than half the population of the Principality? [*Cries of* "No!" *and cheers.*] Previous speakers had interrupted the torrent of their rhetoric by admitting that they were on delicate ground. He would admit that he also was on delicate ground in raising such a question, because there did not breathe a man who entertained more strongly than he the conviction that there was not an Assembly in the world so unfitted and incapacitated to lend its mind for five minutes to the discussion of a purely religious question as the Assembly which he was addressing. How was the House of Commons composed? There were here—and he was glad to see them—pious adherents of what he should still call, notwithstanding the history of the Under Secretary for the Home Department, the old religion of these islands. These gentlemen, being intellectually satisfied that they at all events belonged to a Church which had in its priesthood an unbroken Apostolic succession, and had therefore the power of administering all the Seven Sacraments to the body of the faithful, regarded with a smile either of the good humour which bespread the countenance of the right hon. Member for East Birmingham when he addressed the House, or of a less sweet-tempered character, the claims of the Anglican Church to be similarly endowed. The House also contained large numbers of members of the Anglican Church, who honestly believed, although they recognised the claims of the Roman Communion to Orders and Sacraments, that they had those blessings too. Interspersed amongst these pious folk were Nonconformists of every sort, kind, and hue, who, differ though they might amongst themselves in many important respects, all agreed in refusing to recognise any real distinction at all between priest and layman. There was also in the House a good galaxy of Jews, together with one Fire-worshipper from the East; while another was promised at the next General Election, who was to sit on the opposite side of the House. There were also some who, in the event of that religious census which hon. Gentlemen opposite desiderated so much, would have to describe themselves as Agnostics, unless they adopted the alternative title which the ingenuity of the Leader of the Opposition had suggested, and called themselves "Naturalists;" thus escaping all religious censure by being confounded with those most innocent examples of mankind, the stuffers of birds and the collectors of insects. Thus composed, and subject to no kind of religious test whatever, the House met to transact, or obstruct, the business of the country in, perhaps, the most intensely secularised atmosphere ever artificially created—an atmosphere so secularised that it would be considered, if not a profanity, at all events an affront to religious sensibility, so much as to utter within the walls of the House any of the more sacred or emotional articles of the Christian's creed. The country had a State Church, from whom blessings flowed, according to Opposition orators, of a very vague kind; and yet things had come to such a pass that in the Supreme Council of the nation it was thought indecent to discuss a really religious question. Whether the House liked it or not, before they could get to the bottom of this question or treat it with the fulness which it deserved, they must ask themselves how far the doctrines and devotional formularies of the Church of England did really represent the most deep-rooted convictions of the Protestant Nonconformists of Wales. It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen opposite—devout members of the Church of England—to make the speeches which they had made. He did not differ from one word of them. They had drawn a great picture of the change which had come over their Church within the last 50 years. The House had heard of abandoned lethargy; of new fervour and vigour, and devotion; and everyone knew that this was no false boast. It was perfectly true that both in England and in Wales the Church of England now occupied a different position from that which it occupied half a century ago. But, although enthusiasm was contagious, it would not do to be carried away by other people's enthusiasm. The Nonconformist who knew the reason of his Nonconformity, who knew why he had taken the step of severing himself from a Church with a noble and splendid history, must ask, before he could be expected to share the enthusiasm of Churchmen, whence that fervour came and from what source it sprang—from a fountain where Nonconformists could slake their thirst, or from a source which was tainted? It was not for him to dogmatise on such a question, but he could not help thinking that man must have been a sluggish student of the most fascinating of all subjects, his own time, if he did not clearly see that this new fervour and spirit in the Church of England was attributable to the growing conviction which had come over it, that she was not called into existence at the bidding of a licentious monarch, desiring to secure male issue, but was a branch of the Catholic Church, with authority to declare the truth and to denounce error, to offer up visible sacrifice, and to perform all the Sacraments of the Church. That was a noble conviction, and were he a Churchman his heart would beat high at this juncture, for he should believe that before very long the notes of catholicity in the Church would sound so loud and clear that they would at last win recognition even from the See of Peter, and that the whole cycle of the beautiful and comforting doctrine of the Catholic Church would be preached by Catholic clergy to Catholic laity. But what had all this to do with the Protestant Nonconformists of Wales — people whose religion, in the hackneyed quotation from Burke, if a quotation from Burke could be hackneyed, was "the dissidence of Dissent and the Protestantism of Protestant religions"? The Welsh Nonconformists must be asked how far they sympathised with the growing sacerdotalism of the Church, how far they agreed with all that they saw going on. Admirable as it was from a Churchman's point of view, it was not so admirable from the Dissenter's. Protestant Nonconformists denied the authority of the Church in its threshold, and they would if they could, strangle all priestly pretensions in their cradle. The fact was, that the gulf between Church and Dissent in Wales was increasing every hour, and it was not unnatural that that should be so when the sources of inspiration were becoming so divided. It was all very well for hon. Members to say—

> "Why dwell on these religious differences? Why accentuate these unhappy distinctions which exist between Christians? Surely the points on which Christians agree are more numerous and more important than those on which they differ?"

That might be true enough; but experience had taught them that it was impossible for Christian men to co-operate in a joint Christian enterprise against an indifferent and careless world, if they were separated by any wide or deep or strong vital distinction. Take the cases of the late Cardinal Manning and the late Mr. Spurgeon, each of whom exercised great influence over the religious feelings of a large number of the population of this city. Each was a fervent—he had almost said fierce—dogmatist. They each held, with passionate conviction, all the central doctrines of the Christian faith, but for the purpose of joint Christian action they were as much separate and apart as if one had been a Buddhist and the other a Mahomedan. And why?—because they differed on the questions of Church authority and the priestly office. And so it was in Wales at the present time. It was because the gulf between Church and Dissent was not an unreal gulf, that it would not be got over by pretending to ignore it. He did not dwell upon these things as one who delighted in them; he wished all men thought alike on religious questions, for he could imagine no greater blessing which could befall a nation than unity of religious faith. But he was certain it was not by Establishing and Endowing one party to a great controversy they would accelerate that by one hour. He would gladly sit down now, but it would be cowardly not to say a single word on the allied subject of Disendowment. He said cowardly because he freely admitted that Disendowment was to him a disagreeable subject. He had no fondness for digging new channels for old endowments; he would make but a poor Charity Commissioner. But when the right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol read out ancient curses from old testamentary dispositions he paid but a slender tribute, he would not say to their intelligence, because that was a debatable proposition, but to their stock of information. If heed had been paid to the curses of pious founders they would all have been dead men long ago; the air was simply thick with such imprecations. What happened immediately after the Reformation, that act of slight structural alteration of which they had heard? The Parliament of Queen Elizabeth struck a distinction, unreal and imaginary in his mind, between superstitious and charitable uses. If a pious founder before the Reformation left lands and money for the erection and maintenance of a row of alms-houses, a Protestant Parliament had no difficulty in declaring that a charitable use, because he could imagine them saying :—

> "If these poor folk were not supported by the testator's bounty they might possibly go on the rates."

But if a man left his lands and his money to a college of priests to say masses for the repose of his soul, and not only of his own soul, but of his father, mother, and his nearest and dearest relatives, "Oh," said a Protestant Parliament, "souls must shift for themselves, they can never come on the rates!" [*Laughter.*] These moneys were without hesitation appropriated for other purposes. The House laughed, but he did not desire them to do so: it was a serious question. The efficacy of prayers for the dead and the reality of the purgatorial state were ancient Christian doctrines, and if curses were to count for anything in this matter he should most dread the curses of those who might, for all he knew, even now be enduring sufferings from which long ago they would have been released had not this House chosen to interfere with their testamentary dispositions. The true view, and the view taken nowadays by all sensible men, is, that if a testator created by his will or by any deed what was called a perpetuity—that was, if he chose to appropriate his property or any part of his property to a purpose which he said was to go on for ever—he ran the risk, if they liked to call it a risk—he called it an advantage—that future times might differ from him very materially as to the best and wisest mode of expending his money, and, therefore, he said, happy was the testator who lived, as they all did now, in times when he might safely dedicate his property to public purposes, satisfied of this, that if 500 years hence those funds were taken away they would at all events, be appropriated, as it was proposed to appropriate funds under this Bill, to the best and most useful public purposes; and would no longer find their way, as once such funds did, into the pockets of private persons. Therefore, although he hoped that this Bill, when it came to be discussed in Committee, would be found to have been drafted in a generous spirit ——["Oh, oh!"] He hoped it would be found so; if it was not he would gladly co-operate with hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they satisfied him that that was not so. He thought the Bill ought to be generous and even lavish in dealing with these matters. As far as tithe was concerned, how was it possible, having regard to its history—he was not now speaking so much of its legal as of its social history—to doubt that the grievance complained of would be removed if tithe were appropriated to purposes in which the whole country shared? He had only to say, in conclusion, that his deliberate opinion was, that the Protestant Nonconformists of Wales were not only well within their moral right, but were only discharging a solemn duty, which they owed both to themselves and to their children, when they did all that in them lay as free citizens of a free State to sever the connection of that State with a Church whose principles they could not admit, whose authority they were compelled to repudiate, and at whose altar they could never bow.

*Sir J. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, he felt at a disadvantage in having to follow the hon. Gentleman, whose eloquent speech had so much interested the House. That speech, however, like many of the speeches delivered in the course of the Debate, was one which dealt not so much with the Church in Wales as with the question of general Disestablishment. Hon. Members from the Principality had complained of English Members taking part in the discussion, but it must be remembered that there were many interests connected with the Church in Wales which were not represented in the House of Commons. There was, for instance, the great college dear to all Welshmen, Jesus College, founded not in pre-Reformation days, but founded by Queen Elizabeth, which for nearly 300 years had been engaged in training young men for the Church of Wales. He did not say it was proposed to take away the property of that college, except so far as they were owners of six advowsons, but it might be said that if they diminished the prestige of the Church of Wales they diminished the prestige of that college. He could not help viewing this matter as an English Churchman, and as an English Churchman he had been taught to believe in the value of an Established Church. The fact was, that the longer the Debate was prolonged the more clearly it was shown that this Bill was not so much a small measure dealing with the Church in the Principality, as it was a Bill for general Disestablishment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had told them that they could not separate the Church of England from the Church of Wales, and all that had passed had confirmed that view. They had already passed beyond the confines of Wales and Monmouthshire. The hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Grant Lawson) told them the other night he would be quite content when this measure was disposed of to have a Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in the Northern Province. No doubt, if the Debate went on much further, hon. Members would be found advocating Disestablishment in East Anglia and Cornwall. Three Members of the Government representing different phases of thought, advocated the Disestablishment of the Church of England. The Home Secretary, speaking as a Liberal politician of the modern school, introduced this measure in a speech which was distinctly a Disestablishment speech. But the Under Secretary for the Home Office went a great deal further than that, for he, being a very High Churchman, and a very sincere and devoted Churchman, complained of the way in which Parliament interfered in the doctrines and ritual of the Church of England, and therefore he wished to terminate the connection between the Church and the State. The speech of the President of the Board of Trade, who was not a Member of the Church, was also undoubtedly in support of the Disestablishment of the Church of England.

*Mr. BRYCE said, that in dealing with the general question of Disestablishment he was endeavouring to answer the arguments that Disestablishment was a wicked thing in itself, and that it ought not, therefore, to be applied to Wales.

*Sir J. MOWBRAY said, that whatever the object and motive of his right hon. Friend might have been, the tone of his speech was certainly in support of Disestablishment everywhere and under all circumstances. But he objected to the Bill not only as a Churchman but as a politician, for this doctrine of overthrowing the Church was closely connected with the doctrine of the disintegration of the Empire. On Friday night they had a Motion to set up several separate Legislatures in the United Kingdom. The champions of the Heptarchy mustered in full force. The hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Lloyd-George) seconded the Motion. That hon. Member, and the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Mr. Dalziel) actually ventured to propound in the House of Commons, and succeeded in inducing a majority to sanction it, a Resolution which embodied what Mr. Canning denounced as the most wild and inconceivable nostrum which could be propounded. Those hon. Gentlemen wanted to break up every institution of the land. But they would find that they could not separate the Church of England from the Church of Wales. It was impossible to disestablish the one without disestablishing the other. That was the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian in 1870; and in 1891, on a Motion for the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church, the right hon. Gentleman referred to his speech in 1870, and said—

> "Since then I have had time to be born again and to come of age."

The right hon. Gentleman then went on to say—

> "I say now what I believed then, and what I believe now, that the operation of Disestablishing the Church of Wales from the Church of England will not be found very easy. I suspect it will be found that it is tied and knotted and tangled, I might almost say in such a multitude of legal bonds and meshes, with the general body of the Church of England, that it would be a very formidable matter indeed to accomplish this purpose."

He thought it was very advantageous that the Debate had taken the turn it had in regard to the Church of England. It was well, in the interest of the Church of England as a whole, that the people of England should fairly realise the true meaning of this insidious

Bill. His right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade said the mind of England had not been directed to the subject of Disestablishment. That remark was not very complimentary to the Liberation Society, which had been agitating for Disestablishment for half a century. Thirty-five years ago he heard the late Mr. Miall raise the question of Disestablishment in the House more than once, and the hon. Member for Nottinghamshire (Mr. Carvell Williams), the Chairman of the Liberation Society, had gathered his friends around him at breakfast for the last twenty years. In any case he could tell the President of the Board of Trade that if the mind of England had not been directed to the question hitherto it would be directed to it by the present Debate. The people of England would realise from that Debate that the leaders of the Liberal Party were prepared, as soon as they could, to Disestablish the Church everywhere and throughout; and when the question was referred to the electors it would be found that the sober thought and judgment of "the predominant partner" was against separating the Established Church of the Kingdom, and then Disestablishing and Disendowing its parts. He, therefore, did not fear that they might see the historic Church of the Kingdom cut up into fragments; but was confident it would remain whole and entire and intact as it had been for so many centuries.

*Mr. D. BRYNMOR JONES (Gloucester, Stroud) said, the arguments used in favour of the Bill fell into two classes. First, that a State maintenance of any particular form of religion was wrong and unjust; and, second, that whether it was right or wrong to maintain an Established Church in England, the special circumstances of Wales justified exceptional treatment. He did not intend to deal at any length with the more general arguments belonging to the first class. It was said that every person who adopted the main arguments of a general kind urged in favour of the Bill must also vote in favour of the Disestablishment of the Church of England. The two main arguments, for instance, of the hon. Member for South Leeds (Mr. Walton) were that it was not fair for the State to give the members of any particular religious communion a special status and special privileges; and secondly, that it was unjust for the State to allow public property, which in its inception was designed, and was for centuries administered in the interest of the whole community, to be administered in the interest of a section of the people. It was perfectly true that if a man started from those abstract first principles, he could be forced to say that the Church of England ought to be Disestablished. But the view of most of the supporters of the Bill was that the question ought not to be decided simply by reference to abstract first principles, but that it ought to be decided by reference to the special circumstances of each portion of the United Kingdom. Hon. Members opposite had denounced the Disendowment clauses of the Bill as a measure of robbery and spoliation. He could quite understand that in the view of those hon. Gentlemen the intended application of the funds was unjust and inexpedient, but he submitted to them that the use of strong terms like "robbery and spoliation" was not justifiable. He did not think that hon. Gentlemen opposite could deny that the funds proposed to be dealt with by the Bill were public property. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade as to the origin of tithes, but it appeared to him that it did not matter what the origin of tithes was. The question the House had got to consider was, whether or not the property proposed to be dealt with by the Bill was public property. Take the case of the rector of a parish. He had simply a life interest which he held under statutory conditions. He had the rectory house and the glebe land; he was seized of the freehold of the parish Church and the parish churchyard, and had possession of the tithe, but he could not alienate any part of this property for his own benefit. His interest was simply a life interest subject to the performance of a public duty, therefore it was not a fair use of language to refer to the proposed diversion of such a fund—even admitting that it was unjust and inexpedient—as robbery or spoliation. He would read from an essay what John Stuart Mill said on this very topic of distinction between private and corporate property.

He was referring to a proposed measure disestablishing and disendowing the Church, and he wrote :—

> "Would you rob the Church, it is asked? And at the sound of these words rise up images of rapine, violence, and plunder; and every sentiment of repugnance which would be excited by a proposal to take away from an individual the earnings of his toil or the inheritance of his fathers comes heightened by the added idea of sacrilege. But the Church! Who is the Church? Who are the persons whose rights we are proposing to take away? Not the clergy; from them we do not propose to take anything. To every man who benefits by the Endowment we have said we would leave his entire income. But if not the clergy we are not proposing to rob the laity; on the contrary they are robbed already if the fact be that the application of the money to its present purpose is no longer advisable. We are exhorting the laity to claim their property out of the hands of the clergy, who are not the Church but only its managing members."

He, therefore, said that the moment this matter came to be examined on the principle that there was a distinction between public and private property it must be recognised that this Bill in dealing with the property of the Corporations which together formed the Endowment of the Welsh Church was proceeding on exactly the same principle as the Charity Commissioners, when sanctioning a new scheme, or the Court of Chancery when dealing with charity trusts. It had been said that Lord Rosebery, in his speech at Cardiff, lent colour to the proposition that by what took place at the Reformation the property of the Church of Rome was transferred to the Church of England. But if the words were fairly construed, they were not susceptible of that crude interpretation. What the Prime Minister said was this :—

> "If I am correct in my reading of these Endowments, and if my statement as to the Reformation is correct, it is not wise for the defenders of the Church to rest too much on the right of property, because if the indefensible right to ancient property rested in any way in these Endowments, it rested, not with the Reformed, but with the Roman Catholic, Church."

He did not suppose anybody would really imagine that the Prime Minister understood that the funds belonging to the National Church before the Reformation were vested in the Pope of Rome or in any Romish Corporation. What Lord Rosebery said amounted to this: that, as a result of the series of legislative measures and great transactions and that movement of thought to which they gave the collective name of the Reformation, property which, before the Reformation, had been enjoyed by one Church was transferred to what was practically another Church—at any rate in the Seventeenth Century. He fully concurred that there was historical continuity between the National Church before and after the Reformation; but what he denied was, that historical continuity necessarily meant substantial identity. He contended that between the National Establishment before the Reformation and after the Reformation there was not substantial identity between the two bodies. For instance, in regard to the supreme headship of the Church, which was vested in the King of England; in regard to the 39 Articles, which had become the test of orthodoxy; and in regard to the ritual—there had been a difference in the Church which existed before, as compared with the Church which existed after, the Reformation. The only point of identity between the two Churches was, that the form of Church Government was episcopal both before and after the Reformation. But it could not be justly asserted that a Church which had in three fundamental particulars made alterations such as these was the same Church that existed before. The second part of his argument was whether a special case had been made out for the separate treatment of Wales in this matter. That, he submitted, should be decided upon two principles, namely, first of all the principle of Nationality; and secondly, the special or religious development and economic history of the Principality. No one could study the history of Wales without coming to the conclusion that, to all intents and purposes, Wales was a separate nation in the sense in which publicists used the term. In reference to the special development in regard to religion on the part of the people of the Principality, he was immensely touched and interested by the able and eloquent speech delivered by the Member for Cambridge University in the Debate last Session. He referred to the feeling of affection which many people entertained for the Welsh Church, and he pointed out how much that Church had done for the people of Wales. While not contesting the hon. Member's facts, he objected that the inference which the hon. Member sought to draw from those facts was not correct, inasmuch as the hon. Member had ignored one circumstance, and that was that there had always existed in Wales two very distinct classes and orders of men. From the dawn of the Conquest downwards, the great peers and landowners, the gentry of the smaller kind, the judges and county officials, together with their dependents, formed one of those classes; while on the other hand was another class, forming the backbone and by far the greater bulk of the Welsh people, who cultivated the soil. The first class speedily became English in speech, in habits, and in modes of life, and who attracted most attention from the historian, and it was chiefly of this class that the words of the hon. Member for Cambridge University were true. The people of the second class, cultivators of the soil, were unduly depressed by the Conquest of Wales, so far as their intellectual and, at first, their material progress was concerned; and, for centuries after, from the period of Lancastrian legislation, the Welsh people of the soil were practically asleep and the great bulk of them were silent. Not a voice came from them for centuries to tell what their views were. But a revival came at length. That revival, in the extent of its influence, was of a kind that made it difficult to find its historical parallel. It changed the character of the Welsh people; it produced, even in the minds of peasants, a brooding gentle type of Christian character that compared with any saintly character in the history of the Church. It was something more than a religious revival; it was the new birth of a people; it was, in fact, the Welsh Renaissance. And from this movement, so far as the great bulk of the Welsh-speaking people was concerned, might be traced the progress of Wales in various ways, and especially in the matter of education, which culminated in the foundation of the new Welsh University. He wanted the House to understand the great difference between the upper classes and the great bulk of the Welsh people. There was nothing like it in England. A great gulf existed between the two classes in Wales, and continued down to recent times, though, of course, modern changes had introduced a middle class in Wales, which made it not very dissimilar from English society at the present day. He would remind hon. Members of the Commission appointed in 1847 to inquire into the subject of Welsh education. From the Report of that Commission he found that the view which he took of the isolation of the great bulk of the Welsh people was supported by the Commissioners and the evidence given before them, though it might be said that they generalised too rapidly. Mr. Lingen, at the commencement of his report, speaking of the Welshmen in South Wales, said:—

> "Thus his social sphere becomes one of complete isolation from all influences save such as arise within his own order. He jealously shrinks from holding any communion with classes either superior to or different from himself. His superiors are content for the most part simply to ignore his existence in all its moral relations. He is left to live in an under-world of his own, and the mark of society goes so completely over his head that he is never heard of excepting when the strange and abnormal lectures of a new revival, or a Rebecca riot, or a Chartist outbreak, call attention to a phase of society which could produce anything so contrary to all that we elsewhere experience."

This showed that the point which he had been urging was apparent even in 1847 to an impartial observer. Another Commissioner said:—

> "The main instruments of civilisation have been exclusively religious, and the forms of religion which alone have succeeded in reaching the great mass of the inhabitants have been the spontaneous production of the poorer classes."

It was not only in the past that this state of things existed. Matters had recently come under his notice which pointed in the same direction, and the evidence before the Welsh Land Commission showed the same state of things to exist. He would merely pick out two typical instances. Mr. J. M. Davies, of Froodvale, a land agent in the County of Carmarthen, who was the agent for seven considerable estates, said in the course of his evidence:—

> "*Q.*—On the estates you are connected with, have the families of the present tenants been in the same places for many generations?—They have.
>
> *Q.*—I suppose they nearly all habitually use the Welsh language, do they not?—Yes.
>
> *Q.*—And they are Nonconformists?—Yes; to a man, pretty nearly."

The agent of Lord Dynevor said he

thought every one of Lord Dynevor's tenants were Welsh-speaking, and mostly Nonconformists. He said only about half-a-dozen or so were Churchmen; and there are no more Churchmen than formerly. He respectfully suggested that no case could be found of a large estate of a nobleman in any English county, in which practically all the tenants belonged to a different form of religion, and spoke a language different from their landlord, and who, from the historical circumstances to which he had alluded, had become distinctly isolated. He had heard it said by hon. Members opposite that this Bill was a mere political device, and was not intended to pass into law. He could not, of course, help hon. Members from indulging in vain imagining, but, for himself, he desired to say that it did not truly represent the attitude and intention of the Government on this question. The Tory Party might, possibly, obtain a momentary triumph from the Bill being thrown out in another place, but he believed that in that case their triumph would be short-lived, and he would say in reference to the doom of the Establishment in Wales—"if it be not yet it will come." It would come, because never had a Liberal Government taken up a great measure of reform and secured the approbation of the House of Commons without also ultimately securing success for it. Disestablishment would come, because this measure of tardy justice and historical retribution was founded on principles which he was persuaded must, in a generous and democratic community, surely in the long run prevail.

*MR. CHARLES BILL (Staffordshire, Leek) thought that although the Government had been tinkering with this question for the last three years, the delay had not been disadvantageous for the interests of the Church in Wales, as there was evidence of a change of feeling in the country respecting it. In his own constituency, for instance, a public meeting was held a few weeks ago in opposition to the Bill of the Government. That meeting was presided over by a Wesleyan Methodist, and the resolution was proposed by a Roman Catholic and was seconded by a New Connexion Methodist. The chairman said that, though he dissented from the Church of England in religious matters, he was not a political Dissenter, and he thought that the sentiment expressed by that gentleman was in accord with the views of Nonconformists of old days. He only wished that latter-day Nonconformists were more animated by those feelings. He believed, however, that, not only in England but also in Wales, a change of feeling in that direction was setting in. On the occasion of a recent election of Guardians at Bangor the following circular was sent out in Welsh and English:—

> "*To the Electors of Bangor.*—We, whose names appear below, seriously urge Nonconformist electors to vote for and support the Nonconformist Candidates at the election on Saturday. If we, as Nonconformists, are united, our Candidates will be elected, without shadow of doubt. Let no one of us waste votes by giving them to individual persons, but let one vote be given to each of nine Nonconformist Candidates. If members of one denomination support only their own men, the nine Church Candidates are sure to be elected. Every part of Wales will surely prove itself true to its principles next Saturday, and we earnestly hope that Bangor will not be behind in the contest. Nonconformists of Bangor, be again true to your principles!"

Notwithstanding that somewhat hysterical appeal, the House would be surprised to learn that out of nine candidates to be elected seven were Churchmen and only two were Nonconformists. Of course, local influences might materially have affected the result, but, unless some explanation was given, one of two deductions must be drawn—either that there had been a considerable decline of Nonconformity in Bangor, or else that the Nonconformists in that town hated each other more than they hated the Church. It was a great pity that hon. Members who represented Wales should be at such pains to minimise the strong Church feeling which prevailed, at any rate in some portions of the Principality. The hon. Member for Pembrokeshire declared that many petitions against the Bill had been signed by Nonconformists under altogether false pretences. He was surprised that the hon. Member had gone out of his way to belittle the strong Church feeling which existed in some portions of the constituency which he represented; having visited that part of Wales rather frequently, he could say a stronger Church feeling existed there than in most parts of England. There was, for example, the rural deanery of Castle Martin, which had a population of 20,000 in 21 parishes, with 20 clergymen to superintend them. The number of communicants in that rural deanery was returned at 1,631. If they took out the population of Pembroke Dock, over 11,000 people, and deducted it from the 20,000, there was left 9,000, chiefly in rural parishes, amongst whom there were no less than 1,306 communicants, or 15 per cent. of the population, a higher percentage than any other English diocese. Or, if they took the whole population of 20,000, the percentage in that case, including Pembroke Dock, was 8 per cent. Now, the highest percentage of communicants in any English diocese was that of Hereford, which was 11 per cent., and in London the percentage was only 4 per cent. Although he regarded this measure as one of unmerited spoliation, it would to some extent disarm his hostility if he found that the funds which had been devoted from time immemorial to religious uses were not altogether diverted from those uses, but were still to be utilised for the purposes of religion, though in a different form. In this position he found himself fortified by a speech of the late Archbishop of York, Dr. Magee, who said that if the question were put to him—

> "Shall the endowments be secularised or handed over to any one of the orthodox or rival sects, he would answer: 'Take them all, and do with them what good you can.'"

The Home Secretary alleged that full, ample, and generous provision had been given for all Church purposes. Take the curates, who were 550 in number. They would be thrown on the world as the incumbents died off or left their parishes. Even Mr. Gee's famous Disestablishment scheme proposed to compensate the curates at a cost of over £6,000 a year. Was the Home Secretary less tenderhearted than Mr. Gee? In out-of-the-way districts, he believed they would see the spectacle of the Church dying by inches. They would see vicars going on in failing health, knowing that, when their time was over it would be most difficult to carry on the work of the parish, and they would also see sections of parishioners animated by the spirit of the hon. Member for Carnarvonshire, longing for the time when the funds set free would be scrambled for by competing interests. Did hon. Members really think that in the best interests of religion it was desirable in these latter days to abolish that national recognition of religion which was involved in the union of Church and State? Was the condition of those countries where there was nothing but voluntary churches so supremely satisfactory as to induce us in England to cut away our sheet anchor, and to say that any religion you like or no religion at all was to be the rule in England? The hon. Member for Battersea had lately been in America. Did he regard the social and moral and political state of America as satisfactory? Australia, no doubt, presented a remarkable reproduction of our national life, but religion had not that hold of the community, especially in the outlying districts, which it ought to have. He should vote against the Bill because it was, in his opinion, an unreal attack on the Church. It might be a reconnaissance in force, but any attack on the Church in Wales ought to be directed against the Church in England also. They must sink or swim together, and his belief was that both in England and Wales the Church would keep its head above water, and that as time went on it would be more appreciated by all classes of the people whom it was its mission to serve.

*Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, the chief characteristic of the Debate had been the steady widening of the point of view; the issue at first had been that of Welsh national opinion, but its scope had been enlarged until the whole question of the principle of Established Churches had been taken in. In regard to the first point, victory had been gained all along the line. The Welsh Church, instead of dreading Disestablishment as a great evil, ought to welcome it as one of the greatest boons. The ideal of a Christian Church ought to be entire submission to the will of its Founder, both in doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies; and in the judgment of Nonconformists—and he was glad to say of many Churchmen also—the intrusion of the State into sacred things was productive of nothing but evil. He knew of no Church so entirely subject to the State in all its functions as the Church of England, which was practically a Church created and controlled by Act of Parliament. He had been much astonished by the statement of the hon. Member for Plymouth that Parliament could no more alter the doctrines of the Church than it could alter the laws of gravitation. During the Reformation period Parliament three times radically altered the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies of the Church of England. It broke away from the Papacy under Henry VIII., returned to it under Mary, and broke away from it again under Elizabeth; and these great, sweeping changes were carried out in spite of the protests of the great bulk of the Bishops and clergy. It was an entire misstatement to say that the Church of England was not controlled by Parliament. Were not the Public Worship Regulation Act and the Clergy Discipline Act recent interferences with the powers of the clergy? It had been said that Parliament merely registered what Convocation had previously decided; but was it not a fact that the greatest of all changes made in the Church of England was made in the teeth of the protests of Convocation? If the Church of England was wholly free from control by the State, how was it when a Bishop was inducted into his diocese he had to do homage on behalf of the diocese to the Queen, and took an oath declaring that Her Majesty was the only supreme governor of the realm in spiritual and ecclesiastical, as well as in temporal, things: that no foreign prelate or potentate had any jurisdiction within the realm; and that he held the Bishopric and the spiritualities and temporalities thereof only of Her Majesty, "and for the same temporalities I do my homage presently to Your Majesty. So help me God"? He did not believe there had been any change ever made in the rites or ceremonies of the Church since the Reformation without an Act of Parliament passed though this House, consisting of men of all religions and no religion. Nonconformists honestly held that they were conferring a great boon on the Welsh Church in seeking to deliver her from this bondage, and to endow her with freedom to govern herself as all Christian Churches should do. He believed that a hundred years hence the Church in Wales would realise that the severance of the tie which bound her to the State had conferred upon her inestimable blessings. Look at the existing law as to the appointments of Bishops and Clergy. After the Reformation the supremacy of the Pope was changed for the supremacy of the Crown. All ecclesiastical rights which used to belong to the Pope and the higher Roman Clergy passed to the Crown and Parliament, including the appointment of Bishops. As they all knew, the appointment of Bishops used to be made mainly on political and secular grounds, and in no proper sense on spiritual grounds. Who had virtually the appointment of Bishops of the Church of England at the present moment? Everyone knew it was the Prime Minister of the day. He might be a Presbyterian, a Roman Catholic, a Unitarian, or an Agnostic, yet he had the appointment of the chief officers of a Christian Church. Could anything be more contrary to the intentions of the Founder of the Christian religion or the letter or spirit of the New Testament? It might be said that this was ancient history, and that the appointment of Bishops was now in perfectly sound hands. He would quote from the "Life of Bishop Wilberforce" an extract from his diary in 1868, about the way in which Bishops were appointed by Mr. Disraeli:—

> "November 28.—Much talk with the Dean of Windsor. He talked with great reserve about the late appointments, but said: 'The Church does not know what it owes to the Queen. Disraeli has been utterly ignorant, utterly unprincipled; he rode the Protestant horse one day, then got frightened that it had gone too far, and was injuring the county elections, so he went right round and proposed names never heard of. Nothing he would not have done. . . . Disraeli recommended —— for Canterbury, but the Queen would not have him; then Disraeli agreed, most reluctantly and with passion, to Tait. . . . Disraeli then proposed Wordsworth for London. The Queen objected strongly. . . . Then she suggested Jackson . . . and Disraeli chose Jackson. The Queen would have greatly liked ——, but Disraeli would not hear of him. You cannot conceive the appointments he proposed and retracted, or was overruled. . . . He had no other thought than the votes of the moment; he showed an ignorance about all Church matters, men, opinions, that was astonishing, making propositions one way and the other, riding the Protestant horse to gain the boroughs, and then, when he thought he had gone so far as to endanger the counties, he turned round."

Would not the Church in Wales gain from being relieved from this galling slavery? Then it would be further relieved from the evils of lay patronage. One half of the clergy were appointed by lay patrons, who owned the right of next presentation just as they might own land, houses, or cattle. Nothing but long familiarity with it had deadened the mind of the country to this unscriptural, un-Christian method of selecting the clergy. It involved continued traffic in the sale of livings. The late Archbishop Magee, in one of his charges, used these words :—

> "It is a fact that a certain number of patrons are in the habit, whenever their livings fall vacant, of selecting the oldest and most decrepit clergymen they can find, after the most careful search and inquiry, and putting them into their livings, in order to enhance the selling value of these in the market—a proceding which I regard as one of deliberate and enormous wickedness, and yet which, at present, may be, and is, adopted in defiance of parishioners and of Bishops, for there are absolutely no limits in law to the age or decrepitude of a presentee."

One of the principal witnesses before the Royal Commission of 1878 was Mr. Emery Stark, one of the principal clerical agents, and his evidence gives striking proof of the demoralisation of the clergy which was produced by this traffic in livings. He said :—

> "The Commissioners are well aware that the sale of advowsons, with the understanding that immediate possession is to be given, is, according to the law, illegal. Three-fourths of the patrons with whom I have come in contact, and among them clergymen of the highest standing, do not recognise any moral crime in an infraction of the present law of simony; and the consequence is, that they freely and unhesitatingly sell and purchase advowsons with the understanding that immediate possession is to be given, not looking upon it as any sin."

Was it not a scandal that such a thing should exist at this time of day? It would be conferring a favour on the Welsh Church to relieve it from this traffic in the cure of souls, and from the political appointment of bishops, and to give it the precious boon of self-government. One reason why the Nonconformists in Wales were so opposed to the Church was that they had witnessed for centuries the effect of these malign practices. Why had they so long existed? It was because Church and State had been blended together in unholy alliance, and because there had been no observance of the sacred behest—

> "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

The Welsh Church is now offered an opportunity of starting clear of this Egyptian bondage. The argument that the State "ought to profess a religion" was an argument of a most respectable kind, and he did not deride it, for it contained an element of truth—namely, that all men, rulers included, ought to be subject to the Law of God. So ought the nation in its corporate capacity, but that did not involve the establishment of a Church. The connection of Church and State was contrary to the teaching of the Master himself, and was necessarily fraught with those evils of which he had spoken. It was said that if the Church was disestablished it would follow that this House would open its proceedings without any recognition of God, and that prayers must be discontinued. He would point to the example of the United States, where every Session of the Congress was opened with prayer. Indeed, the President went much further, for every year he set apart a day for national thanksgiving, and also occasional fast days.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): What denomination?

*MR. S. SMITH: The whole country. The President acted, not as representing a denomination, but as representing the entire Christian Church, composed of all denominations. There was more recognition of Christianity in the United States than there was in England. How many years was it since this country had made an appeal to the Almighty by setting apart a day for fasting and humiliation? The time was when it was customary; but the practice was wholly passing away, and he was sorry it was so. He wished we could recur to the more wholesome precedents of former days—precedents which are acted upon in the United States, but not here, and surely this proves that the existence of a national Church did not afford any security for the national recognition of God. The Welsh Church would be given by this Bill the opportunity of carrying out enormous reforms, including the association of the laity with the clergy in the government of the Church. One of the chief hindrances to the success of the Church in Wales had been the absence of any control on the part of the laity. The Church would be greatly improved when the laity had equal power with the clergy. If ever the Church of England was Disestablished it would be owing to the growing sacerdotalism. The leader of a large party, Lord Halifax, was actually suing for Communion with the Church of Rome, and asking for alliance with it, supported by tens of thousands of members of the National Church. This was the thing that would Disestablish the Church of England. Disestablishment was coming sooner or later for the whole country, and it was well members of the Church should know who its real authors were. It was not the Nonconformists who in the last resort would Disestablish it; but it was the sacerdotalists within it. True, the Church in Wales was much more earnest and devoted than it was some years ago, but it was further apart from Nonconformity in doctrine and in teaching than at any time since the Reformation. The strong feeling on this subject all over England would ere long find expression in a way that would surprise this House. To Disestablish the Church in Wales was to give it a chance of vitality and of true reformation, to pave the way for a better understanding between the sections which divided religious society in Wales, and to remove the source of much existing bitterness. The cause of Disestablishment was the cause of righteousness; and there was not a Member who did not know that sooner or later it would be carried to victory.

*Mr. BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom) said, he wished to look at the matter from purely a business point of view. They were told, and he believed, that the people of Wales were a religious people; but were they more so than the people of England, Scotland, or Ireland? Argument of this description was not altogether worthy of the occasion. Let it be assumed—let them try to believe—that all Members were honest in the votes they were about to give. He wished to find the birthday of the so-called national sentiment of Wales, because if there was no national sentiment apart from political desire they ought not to pass this Bill. If there was to be a religious census, Nonconformists ought to be divided into two classes, and those who were in favour of Disestablishment ought to be distinguished from those who were against Disendowment. He believed there were many Nonconformists who would hesitate before they would touch the endowments of the Church of their forefathers. Where was the birthplace and origin of the so-called national sentiment? It did not exist before 1812—it did not exist then. There was an excellent reason for it. It was only in the year 1797 that the Wesleyan Nonconformists first became a well-formed body, and it was not until 1812 that the Calvinistic Methodists got their Deed of Trust. No one would be bold enough to assert that even in 1812 the desire for Disestablishment was synchronous with Disendowment. First came Nonconformity, the cause of which was, in the first instance, for the sake of argument, the failing of the Church of England. He accepted that, though he did not admit that it was true. From 1812 to 1834 nothing happened, but in 1834, 500 preachers and elders of the Welsh Methodists, at their annual meeting at Bala, unanimously resolved that they deeply lamented the nature of the agitation having for its object the severance of the National Church from the State. Therefore, in 1834, there was no national sentiment in favour of Disestablishment and Disendowment. Coming to the year 1870, one year after Parliament had dealt with the Irish Church, Mr. Watkin Williams introduced a Resolution into the House dealing with the Church in Wales. Disestablishment without Disendowment was of no value at all," he said. Was it national sentiment that moved him? The present Member for Midlothian voted against that Resolution for the reason, and a very good reason it was, that it was not called for by the circumstances of the times, and that it would be a mischief to carry it out. The national sentiment, then, did not live in 1870. What was there to show that it existed between 1870 and 1885? It had its birthday in 1885. It had, therefore, existed for ten years, and what were ten years in the life of a Church hundreds of years old? In 1885 it was the great argument of Radicals that it was the Conservative party who first put the question forward of danger to the Church. It was the late Prime Minister who said, in 1885, that if the Radicals obtained power, they would do then what they were doing now. It was then that the key-note was given to Wales, and since then she had done what she could to press the question in the House. He would call the attention of the House to something written in 1885 by the present Member for Cardiff. When he was accused of intending to make an attack on the Church of England, he said it was not the Church he wanted to hurt or her Endowment he wanted to injure; but his complaint was that the clergymen in Wales were Tories. What a beautiful reason for Disestablishing the Church! Because the clergy happened to be Tories, therefore the Church was to be Disestablished and Disendowed. That was the best reason the hon. Gentleman could give. When it suited the Radical party to find fault with the clergy for being political agents, they did it, but not else. He wished now to draw attention to the observations of the present Leader of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said that the ballot boxes and the franchise had been the machinery that had brought the question forward. The Ballot Act was passed in 1873. In 1874 there was a general election, the Ballot Act was in force, and there was household suffrage, but there was no national sentiment. Another general election took place in 1880, but there was no national sentiment then. In 1885, for the first time, traces of it were found. If no better case could be made out than that their national sentiment was ten years old, the House ought to pause before it Disestablished a Church which was hundreds of years old. He now came to what took place in 1886. Mr. Dillwyn introduced a resolution in 1886. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then said that, according to the established and necessary proceedings in Parliament, the Government could not support resolutions unless they were prepared to take upon them definite and early action. Did the House think that the Government of the day would not have been keen enough to take action if there was anything like a national sentiment with political power behind it? Then he came to 1892, and in that year he found the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian addressing a crowd of admirers in Wales, and reminding these Welsh people that their political regeneration was of very recent date. He would now draw attention to a few of the reasons which hon. Members from Wales had given for Disestablishment and Disendowment. Though he looked upon them as the true reasons for the agitation, he considered them wholly insufficient. The first was that the Welsh people were Radicals and the Welsh clergy Tories. That was the hon. Member for East Carmarthen. Secondly, the Church of England in Wales, with its stereotyped ritual and historical constitution, was utterly unsuited to the genius of the Welsh people. Thirdly, that the Nonconformist ministers did not stand in the eye of the law so high socially as the most insignificant clergyman. That was what Nonconformists complained of and wished to see changed. That reason was given by the hon. Member for East Glamorgan. What had it to do with Disestablishment and Disendowment? Was the House to be told that because Nonconformist ministers did not stand so high socially as the most insignificant curate, the Church was to be Disestablished? It was an absolutely inaccurate reason. The law knew no difference between them. The fourth reason given was that the Church was a proselytising Church, and was waging war against Nonconformity. Who was waging war now against the Church? Surely those who were in favour of passing this Bill. That was the saying of the hon. Member for East Denbigh. These might be very good reasons. They might account for something; they might lead the House to see that there was some slight jealousy between Nonconformists and the Church of England, but they should be set aside and have no attention paid to them when the House was dealing with the all-important question of Disestablishing and Disendowing the Church of the forefathers of the Welsh people. Then came a reason which he could not believe to be a good one, and which he certainly did not consider true or sufficient. The hon. Member for the Carnarvon District said:—

> "During the whole history of the Church in Wales she had been the enemy of the common people, and he protested against any indulgence to the establishment of a priesthood who during the whole of their career had simply had one regard—that of the betrayal of the nation's highest interests."

To say that the clergy in Wales had betrayed their trust knowingly or maliciously was to make an assertion for which there was no historical foundation. The Home Secretary reminded him of the famous highwayman, who, having lightened ladies of their purses and jewels, used to invite them to descend from their coach and to step a minuet upon the sward in order to prove his friendly disposition—for the right hon. Gentleman declared that, although he wanted to take the Church's Endowments, he wished her nothing but good. They could not take from the Church her Endowments, which were, so to speak, the breath of her life, without injuring her, for the Church could not do as well without Endowments as she could with them. No doubt the Endowments of the Church were the gifts of pious donors in years gone by. He should like to hear how Nonconformists would argue the case if they should be told that Endowments given to them were to be taken away, and that they were to start afresh to do the best they could. The President of the Board of Trade had said on a former occasion that in 20 years' time the Church would not feel the change which they were asked to effect; but 20 years hence was 20 years hence, and to ask the Church to look forward to such a distant time was not reasonable. No valid reason had been adduced in support of this proposal to take her Endowments from the Church and to sever the Church from her connection with the State. He honestly believed that there was something grand in the connection between a State religion and the Civil Power. He had never heard of a State being the better for having no connection with an Established religion, and in a country like ours it was something to be proud of to see the State associated with Religion.

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) was anxious to say a few words in that Debate, because he approached the subject from a standpoint from which only one other Member had approached it, namely, the standpoint of one who had been brought up in the Church of England, and who was now a member and a communicant of that Church. The one Member of the late Government who had addressed the House that evening had stated several times that all the arguments which he had heard from the Ministerial side of the House were arguments which would apply as well to proposals for the Disestablishment of the Church of England in England as to proposals for the Disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales. The right hon. Gentleman ridiculed the particular argument which he called the argument of Home Rule; but it seemed to him that that argument went indisputably to support Welsh Disestablishment as distinguished from the Disestablishment of the Church in England. Out of 31 Welsh Members, returned to support the cause of Welsh Disestablishment and Disendowment, four were returned without opposition, but not one out of the three who were returned to oppose that policy was elected without a contest. The average majority of the 27 Disestablishment Members who were opposed was 1,975, only 25 short of 2,000; whilst the average majority of the three who were returned to oppose Disestablishment was only 312. The Bishop of St. Asaph, in his statistical eccentricities, counted as against Disestablishment and Disendowment every elector in Wales who voted for a Unionist at the last election, in spite of the fact that it had been proved that thousands of these electors voted only for Unionists who declared that they were in favour of Disestablishment, and that thousands more voted for candidates who declined to express any definite opinion upon the subject. The Bishop of St. Asaph sought to show that the cause of Disestablishment was supported by only 47 per cent. of the electorate, or less than half. In estimating the total number of electors for Wales, the reverend Prelate took the registers of the various constituencies and the whole number of names on each register. He overlooked the fact that there were such things as duplicates. There was, for example, an elector in one constituency whose name appeared in the list six times, although, of course, he could only vote once for that constituency. The reverend Prelate also paid no regard to the fact that the register was a year old when the last General Election was fought, and he took no account of the number of men who had died, and of the number who had left the Principality. Ten per cent. was really too low an estimate of the number of names that ought to be knocked off that register in consequence of deaths and removals; but taking that estimate he (Mr. Morton) arrived at this result: that the supporters of Disestablishment were entitled to claim that they had on their side 47-90ths, or a majority of the electorate of Wales, instead of only 47 per cent. In 1880, when there were only 33 Members for Wales and Monmouthshire, 28 Members were elected who were in favour of Disestablishment, and 5 who were against it. In 1885, when the number of Members was raised to 34, 29 were returned in favour of Disestablishment and 5 against. In 1886, 28 Members were returned in favour of Disestablishment and 6 against; but by the result of a bye-election these numbers were changed respectively into 29 and 5. Then at the last General Election, when the Liberal Party had taken up Disestablishment in Wales as the second plank in its platform, the number of Members returned in favour of Disestablishment swelled from 29 to 31, in spite of the activity and enthusiasm of the Bishop of St. Asaph on the other side, and the number returned against Disestablishment dwindled from 5 to 3. He should have thought if, as hon. Gentlemen opposite sometimes maintained, there was nothing inconsistent between Toryism and Democracy, a *prima facie* case had been made out for the Bill. He had noticed that few arguments had been directed against Disestablishment as distinct from Disendowment. One of the chief arguments advanced by the right hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill was that the four dioceses affected by the Bill were part of the province of Canterbury. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of this as a wicked and cruel proposal, and the noble lord the Member for Edinburgh said the Church of England was one and indivisible, and that if they were to have Disestablishment he would rather have it for the whole Church and not piecemeal. He was unable to follow that argument. He did not understand why the severance of the four dioceses could be anything more than one of those operations of reorganisation which repeatedly took place in branches of every Church which claimed to be a portion of the Catholic Church. It proceeded in the Anglican Church, in India and the Colonies, and elsewhere, and he would say that the question of Establishment made no difference whatever to the unity of the Church. Let him take the case of the Roman Catholic Church. It was Established in Spain, where certain public funds were guaranteed and enforced by the State. In Ireland the Roman Catholic Church was not Established. Was it less a portion of the Roman Catholic Church on that account than the Church in Spain? He might point out that in the United States, in India, and in Ireland, they had now Established or Disestablished Anglican Churches in communion with the English Church, and they were every whit as much part of that Church as any diocese in England. He would now refer to the speech of the late Home Secretary—a speech which, he observed, did not give much satisfaction to hon. Gentlemen opposite, for he frankly admitted that the Church of England was bound in fetters, and trammels, and bonds, and that if he were a member of the Church of England he would be against those fetters and bonds. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Church in Wales would no longer be a portion of the Church of England, because it would be governed by a specially constituted body, but that was not the view accepted by the hon. Gentlemen behind him. The Anglican Church in their colonies was separately governed by bodies, yet they were in communion with the Church of England. The right hon. Gentleman told them to take the case of the Disestablished Church in Ireland, and then he said the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland was governed and served by earnest and devoted bishops and priests, as earnest and devoted as any bishops and priests found in any part of the world. The right hon. Gentleman then said:—

> "Look at the effect of that Church not being Established. The effect is that the priests of Ireland are dragged at the heels of the people into the vortex of politics, which they would not otherwise enter."

The party opposite must select which leg they were going to stand on, for this was exactly the opposite of the argument they had been accustomed to. When Home Rule was before the House they were told that the people were driven like sheep by the priests, but when it was a question of Disestablishment they were told that the priests were dragged at the heels of the people. He admitted that they could not consider the question of Disestablishment apart from the question of Disendowment. It seemed to him that the arguments which hon. Gentlemen had used on this question mixed up the question of property as held by an individual and property as held in trust by a Corporation. He admitted that when a man had earned the property he held, or if he had been brought up in the expectation of receiving property, they were accustomed to think that it was a great hardship that he should be deprived of that property, and that he had an abstract right to it. No such claim could be made on behalf of a Corporation holding property in trust. While a man might be considered to have a right to the property he possessed, he had no right to control the way in which that property should be disposed of after his death. But supposing they allowed that a man had the right to control his property and to say how it should be applied after his death, it seemed to him even in that case it could be argued that the present Church of England in Wales could not claim an absolute right to the property it now held. It had been pointed out over and over again that the property held now by the Church was given to the Church by pious donors many centuries ago, at a time when all the people in Wales and in England held the same religion and were in communion with the same Church. There was no difference of opinion. All persons, of whatever opinion, even those who held no religious opinion whatever, were today the true and accurate heirs of those people who formed the whole nation centuries ago, to whom those funds were left. He therefore said that no one section of the people living in Wales to-day could claim to have the same administration or profit out of those funds. He noticed that the right hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill said, in arguing about the ancient pious donors, that the fact that the funds were left to the Church was a proof that they agreed with the teaching of the Church. He was willing to allow to hon. Members opposite that the Church of England to-day was essentially the same Church in organisation and in history as the Church of England which existed before the days of the Reformation. He did not pretend that the Church was created anew at the Reformation; but surely hon. Members could not contend that no change of opinion or of belief had taken place since, say, the Twelfth Century and the present time. Surely there were many doctrines of vast importance which had been changed since that time. For example, the bulk of the Church of England did not allow masses for the souls of the dead, nor did they hold with the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The fact of the pious donors of the Twelfth Century leaving those funds for the Church as it was then so far from being an argument to say that they agreed with the Church of England in Wales to-day was distinctly an argument in the contrary direction. Those Endowments of the Church, particularly tithes, were left to the Church at a time when the duties performed by the Church were vastly more extensive than the duties performed by the Church to-day. That was a point upon which sufficient stress had not been laid. If the phrase "religious uses" was employed to denote the purposes for which the Endowments were originally given he pointed out that the mediæval Church, to which those Endowments were left, not only performed spiritual duties, but all education—elementary, secondary, and higher; and even, to a certain extent, technical education—was in those days in the hands of the Church; and this work the Church was able to overtake by reason of the Endowments. All the work now done by hospitals, dispensaries, and the affording of medical relief was then done by the Church. When the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square (Mr. Goschen) spoke of diverting the funds of the Church from spiritual purposes to the establishment of art galleries he could not help recalling to mind that the Mediæval Church, supported by these funds, was the great supporter of the art museums of the time. The Mediæval Church, moreover, in the country districts at least, supplied the hostelries for travellers, and afforded the whole poor relief of the country. When hon. Members spoke of diverting those funds from their original purposes he said, rightly looked at, this Bill proposed to restore those funds in a large measure to the original purpose for which they were left, and from which since they had been diverted. It had been declared over and over again that the scheme of Disendowment proposed in the Bill was a mean scheme. The right hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill said that the scheme was mean to incumbents, because it deprived them of their emoluments on the resignation of their livings. But according to the Bill, any incumbent in Wales who continued the duties he was now performing would for so long receive his present stipend. He was placed in precisely the same position as that which he now occupied, or rather in a slightly better position, for while now, if he gave up his position he also gave up the whole of its emoluments, under the Bill he could resign and receive some compensation. Then the scheme was said to be mean in respect of the curates. The sole proposal made in the Bill was to hand over the curates to the tender mercies of the incumbents who employed them. To say that that were hard measure it was to make a charge against the incumbents themselves. He remembered one case of a vicar in the Disestablished Church of Ireland, who as soon as possible after Disestablishment left his living with a sum of money, obtained another living in England, the stipend of which had been up to then sufficient to maintain the vicar, and preached an annual sermon on the wickedness of Disestablishment and Disendowment in Ireland. But the meanest part of all the scheme, it was said, was the treatment of the Welsh Church itself. He did not see how from a pecuniary point of view that treatment could be considered mean. The Bill proposed that the Disestablished Church should be allowed not merely the exclusive use of the Cathedrals, but should no longer have the expense and duty of maintaining them. But, passing to the main point, he believed that the spiritual interests of the Church of England in Wales would be very largely increased and improved by this Bill. The right hon. Baronet, who moved the rejection of the Bill spoke of the Welsh Church as having displayed an aggressive vitality in the last ten years. Yes, but it was not against sin and crime so much as against Dissent. As a member of the Church of England who desired to see the bounds of the Church of England extended, and her communicants increased, he distinctly did not wish to see the Church in any part of the world placed by the State in a position of special dignity or importance, or placed by the possession of ancient emoluments, left when the whole of the people were of one communion, in a position of special pecuniary importance. It was only by going to the people of Wales on terms of equality and brotherhood that the Church could ever extend its influence. Those who urged the importance of social distinction for the clergy of the Church, and maintained that the Church ought to be placed in a position of the law and dignity, had completely lost the spirit which originally inspired the Church. The right hon. Baronet who moved the rejection of the Bill stated that, as Disestablishment in Ireland had weakened the union, so Disestablishment in Wales would tend towards Home Rule in Wales. It was curious that right hon. Gentlemen opposite were continually determined to ignore the force of nationality as a motive force. It was the most vital and important force to be found in any part of the United Kingdom at present. Gentlemen on the ministerial side of the House did not seek to stimulate the force of nationality in the several parts of the United Kingdom; they did not think that it was possible to do so, but they recognised that since the beginning of the connection between the Church in Wales and the Church in England, that Church had been continually antagonistic with the national enthusiasm of the Welsh people. One hon. Member had pointed out that this country had had a long struggle with Rome, as a foreign power seeking to interfere in England, and that at the Reformation England had finally freed herself from the domination of Rome. But the hon. Gentleman forgot to notice the fact that Wales never had to complain of the interference of Rome. What from the very beginning Wales had to complain of, and did complain of, was the interference of the Archbishop of Canterbury in her own ecclesiastical affairs. The struggle with Canterbury began in the time of William Rufus. The Welsh petitioned the Pope, as an external authority of some influence to whom they might appeal, against the anti-national proceeding of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in appointing to administer Welsh dioceses Norman Bishops who could not speak Welsh. From that time onwards the struggle had been, on the part of the Welsh people, a national struggle; it had been a national struggle in which they sought to sever their ecclesiastical relations with the Province of Canterbury. As a member of the Church of England who desired to see the Church of England increased and strengthened in power, it seemed to him the only chance the Church of England in Wales had was, that she should be severed from the Province of Canterbury, and that she should be relegated into a distinctive Welsh institution, that she might appeal freely and fairly to the national instincts of the Welsh people. Severed from those artificial State Distinctions, and State Endowments, and State Possessions which she at present enjoyed, she might have a chance of appealing on equal terms with the Welsh people, and might become, in very truth, the Church of Wales.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: At the close, Mr. Speaker, of a Debate which has lasted five nights, which has been distinguished, I venture to say, amongst the Debates of recent years, not only by the ability, but by the fulness of the speeches which have been delivered, which has ranged over questions not only of great importance for the moment, but over questions which have an immense historical interest, whatever be the result of this particular controversy, it would be, I think, absurd that I or any other speaker should attempt to reiterate and, as it were, sum up all the valid arguments that have been urged either for or against the positions we respectively hold. No such task, at all events, will be attempted by me. I shall endeavour very briefly to give the House the views that I have long held, views only confirmed by the tenour of our recent discussions, and to explain in a very simple way the great and leading motives which induce me to give the vote that I shall give to-night. I shall therefore not waste the time of the House in traversing the weary ground of Welsh history; I do not think we have anything to be ashamed of with regard to that particular portion of the debate. I am not going to follow the Home Secretary in discussing the exact value to be attached to Sunday school attendances or to the numbers on the communion roll of the various bodies, or to any other of the amateur efforts that have been made to arrive at a true proportion between the Established Church on the one hand and the collective body of Nonconformity on the other. We, at all events, have the *beau rôle* on this occasion. We, at all events, have always desired that we should not be compelled to depend upon these conjectural estimates, but that we should have at our disposal the actual figures got by official returns of the facts of the case. Had we been permitted by the gentlemen who are now so lavish in their arguments drawn from their own estimates—had we been permitted to obtain these estimates, it might have been worth while my occupying the House with the deductions which might be made from them. We should have rested upon solid ground. But really, upon the quaking and moving bog of these interminable calculations with regard to which nobody can come to any final conclusion, which never have been tested, which have been brought together by irresponsible officials, I think it would be perfect folly to ask the House, either now or at any future time, to waste any of its time or strength. Putting statistics thus aside until the happy date when it shall please the Welsh Nonconformists to assist us in arriving at the real facts, I also say that I shall not dwell upon the argument which has been stated, and re-stated, and reiterated by speaker after speaker to very nausea—I mean the argument that because 31 out of 34 Welsh Members desire Disestablishment, therefore, by constitutional practice, by the laws of constitutional equity, Disestablishment should be granted. In the first place, I am told there is some possibility that a not distant event may alter that fraction. I do not know what the Welsh Members think of that. I do not know whether they think a fraction of three to 31 is to be the perpetual law of the Principality, and that we are never more to see in this House anybody but the faithful three who are in favour of the Establishment. But, from such information as I have been able to collect, I think it not improbable that that fraction may be materially altered in a comparatively small number of months. Whether this electoral conjecture be true or untrue, are we bound by anything that deserves to be called a reason not to look behind the electoral facts of the day? Our electoral system is a rough-and-ready, and, on the whole, not an unjust method of arriving at the popular opinion of the country at large. The inequality which undoubtedly exists, or the want of representation of particular opinion in one part of the country that undoubtedly exists, is balanced by a corresponding injustice in another part of the country. But wherever it happens, the differences of opinion are fairly evenly distributed over any large district, and under the system we have chosen to adopt you will necessarily have the grossest and most absurd injustice with regard to the representation of particular classes. Scotland and Wales are standing examples of this injustice. No human being endowed with even the slightest modicum of judicial equity and the smallest amount of knowledge of the facts of the case could pretend that either the Scotch or the Welsh representation follows the balance of Scotch or Welsh opinion. I have no reason to deny, and it may be perfectly true, that the majority of the Welsh are in favour of Disestablishment, as it may be true that the majority of the Scotch are in favour of the policy of the party opposite. But I know enough of Scotland by personal experience, and I know enough of Wales by information I have collected from various sources, to make me perfectly confident that the system of representation in those two countries is grossly anomalous and unjust. I do not complain of that; that is an instance of the working of our electoral system. But do not try to make us shut our eyes to the plain facts of the case, or pretend to tell us that we are incompetent to look behind the gross, the broad, and the obvious facts of the representation of Wales—to the real electoral opinion which lies behind it. I say, and hon. Gentlemen opposite know it in their hearts, that if the electoral opinion could be collected in a manner that would do justice to minorities in Wales a very different proportion of Members than 31 to 3 would come to this House in favour of the destruction, or of the Disestablishment at all events, of the English and Welsh Church in that part of the United Kingdom. I dismiss, therefore, as unworthy of our notice, that particular argument. I shall not dwell, Sir, at any great length upon one of the most interesting aspects of the Debate—namely, the history of the origin of the Welsh Church. That particular branch of the Debate has been illustrated by no less than two Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench—the Secretary to the Home Office and the Under Secretary to the Home Office—and both of them have with great elaboration explained to the House how very much they differ from the Prime Minister. I cannot conceive why those two Ministers should have taken that line of action. The Home Secretary quite sufficiently explained what his reading of ecclesiastical history was, and it not only differed from the Prime Minister's reading, but absolutely cut to the root the whole argument which the Prime Minister used in Wales only two months before on this very question. That might have been sufficient. But the Under Secretary to the Home Office evidently thought it only due to his chief to follow in the same lines, and so the Prime Minister has been trampled upon not by one but by two of his colleagues, which, from my point of view, was a very unnecessary proceeding. I think no one can now deny the iconoclastic tendencies of the Under Secretary. He was in a destructive mood the day he made that speech. He was not content with destroying his Leader in the Lords, he must destroy his Leader in the Commons too, for he told us no one had been foolish enough to utter Erastian views on this question, knowing perfectly well that the one declared Erastian—the one Member of the House who has never disguised, I will not say his Erastian leanings, but his Erastian convictions, is the present Leader of the House of Commons. The Under Secretary, having destroyed his Leader in the Lords and his Leader in the Commons, then proceeded to attack the Church, to which he announced himself proud to belong, and followed up that by attacking his own family. He singled out as the most characteristic example of the improper use of any property that particular use to which, more or less directly, we owe the presence of the hon. Gentleman amongst us to-day as the representative of a great Whig family. Surely iconoclasm could no further go. The hon. Gentleman must have sat down with the satisfaction that he left nothing undestroyed which the rules of the House would permit him to deal with in this particular Debate. If we put aside, as I think we ought to put aside, at all events, at this late hour, the niceties of this historical Debate, that to which we are ultimately reduced is the practical problem before us. I do not wish to argue it from any high ground. I know that hon. Gentlemen opposite do not agree with those of us on this side of the House who consider that it is absolutely essential to a healthy State that there should be a Church in close connection with it. I know they do not accept that premise, and I do not propose to demonstrate it. I will confine myself to arguments to which men of all shades of opinion, on whichever side of the House they sit, ought, I think, to pay real attention. I therefore put a question to the House. We are now concerned with the Second Reading of a Bill which will deprive that part of the English and Welsh Church situated in Wales of the whole of the property which it possessed before a certain arbitrary chosen year, 1703, and the first proposition to which I ask the House to agree is that it requires a strong case to be made out before we proceed in a legislative capacity to deprive any Corporation of long-standing of the property of which it is possessed. I claim as my ally, so far as that proposition is concerned, the hon. Member for Fife, who spoke this evening. He, I think, expressed his entire sympathy with that general proposition. If anyone denies it, I would ask whether the intention of the donor, even though that donor may have lived a thousand years ago, is to be absolutely neglected. I remember the Under Secretary of the Home Department, and, I think, the President of the Board of Trade, told us that in their belief, if the donor could have foreseen the course of ecclesiastical history during and since the Reformation period, he would have certainly left his money to the village pump or to the museum, or to whatever this Bill is going to give it, rather than to the Church. Well, that is a great exercise of historical imagination. So far as we can put ourselves into the minds of those who lived in the Middle Ages, so far as we can reconstruct in imagination their point of view, I think that if they had been asked whether the money they left for religious purposes should remain in the charge of the same historical organisation which they knew and revered, or whether it should be handed to some future County Council or village council for some unknown local purposes, they would have elected without hesitation to leave it to the Church. Hon. Gentlemen have a right to their opinion, and if their opinion is that gentlemen in the Middle Ages would have preferred a museum, I have no conclusive proof that they are inaccurate. Therefore, Sir, I pass to the second argument. Granted that a donor of the Middle Ages would have preferred the strange provisions of this Bill to the actual destination of his money, I ask whether the existing Church has not derived some rights from the long use of this property? I say that, since the Reformation period, since 1550 or 1560, the Church has had undoubted possession of this money, and has made no change whatever in the formularies by which it is governed. Why are 300 years to be too little for the Church of England, when 25 years are enough to a Nonconformist body? This House, in its wisdom, in the year 1844, passed an Act that any Nonconformist body in the undisputed enjoyment of an endowment for 25 years might hold this endowment for ever without dispute; and the very men in whose behalf that Act was passed, who came to this House as suppliants and requested that that act of justice should be done—these very men are those who say that 300 years of undoubted possession are not sufficient to guarantee the Church of England in Wales against spoliation. Now, be it observed that, so far, I am doing no more than saying there ought to be a strong case made out for this Bill. I am not putting it higher than that; but I say that every man who is going to vote for this Bill, in face of the arguments and facts I have put before him, should hesitate before he gives his vote until conclusive proof is laid before the House in favour of the gigantic and cruel revolution it is proposed to make. What is the case made out for this change? The Member for Fife, I think, is the only Member of the House who says he wants to plunder the Church because he disagrees with it. He told us he was going to say something that had not been said before in the Debate, and I think that was the something. He told us, as I understood him, that the Church of England was a sacerdotal Church, that he and his Nonconformist friends were irreconcilably opposed to sacerdotalism, and that that was an adequate reason for passing the Bill for which he was going to vote to-night. As he was alone in that opinion, and as it savours more of an age of bigotry and persecution than of the enlightened era in which it is our privilege to dwell, I go to the arguments which received apparently more support from Gentlemen on the other side of the House, and I find several arguments which require notice. There was one given us, in eloquent language, by the President of the Board of Trade. He quoted Primitive Christianity, and he told us that in the time of St. Paul there were no Endowments, and that St. Paul supported himself by his own labour. I do not know whether he seriously thinks that the change of circumstances, which have come over the world in the 1,800 years which have succeeded, requires ministers of religion to support themselves by trade other than that of preaching the Gospel? If he does not, I am surprised at the argument he brought forward. He tells us that Primitive Christianity is opposed to the views that we take, and he went on, with all that wealth of historical knowledge and information which is at his command, probably more than any of other Member of the House, to tell us that the whole progress of the Church since those primitive times has been one in which wealth has acted as a corrupting influence. That the Church, after it became Established, consisted of proud and bloated prelates may be or may not be a true account of what happened in the first 12 or 14 centuries; but what have bloated prelates to do with the condition of the wealth of Wales at this moment? Are we to describe as clergy corrupted with wealth those who are living on the petty stipends which are all the Welsh clergy now get from their Endowments? Are they lapping in luxury on £100 and £130 a year? Are they clothed in purple upon the wretched salary which they at present receive? Sir, all this appeal to prejudice based upon history proves to me how little historical studies have to do with sane and sober political appreciation of the facts. The right hon. Gentleman, full of the Borgias and Leos, attempts to give us an estimate of the present position of the Church in Wales, which, to everybody who knows that position, is obviously ludicrous and absurd. The truth is that, whatever may be the faults and the shortcomings of the Church in Wales at the present moment, it certainly is not excess of money that produces those faults; and it certainly will not remedy them by depriving her violently of the relatively small amount of money which her existing Endowments give her. We are told also by the same right hon. Gentleman, and this argument was used a good deal, that the example of the Irish Church was in favour of this measure. A quotation has been made from the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, from which you might almost gather that nothing could be so good for the financial position of the Church as the taking away of its money. Such a statement would be a paradox. I do not deny that persecuted Churches have almost always been pure Churches, and have very often done a great work for the cause in which they believed. But if that argument is worth anything, you will not stop at spoliation. You will try a little burning. And I am bound to say that, if you are simply to consider what effects suffering, persecution, and wrong may, under certain circumstances, produce upon human beings, I think your philanthropy will take a strange turn, of which little parallel will be found since the Middle Ages; and, once again, we are driven back upon arguments which I should have thought the Nonconformists of England would have been the last to hold up to approbation. Then there is another argument. It is an argument that the Church itself is now so bound by legal claims that in the interests of the Church itself it is absolutely necessary that Disestablishment and Disendowment should come about. The Home Secretary, in his opening speech, was very indignant with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) because he described that argument as "cant." Well, Sir, I mean neither to use nor to repeat any hard language, but I think, nevertheless, that there is an easy way of discovering whether or not hon. Gentlemen opposite who intend to vote for this Bill really are animated by a desire for liberating the Church, or whether there is any other motive for their action. The sort of limitations of which the Home Secretary spoke, if I remember rightly, were that the Church of England in Wales could not alter its liturgy, and could not alter its terms of subscription, without coming to Parliament in order to legalise its procedure—without coming to a House composed largely, it is true, of members of its own body, but composed also largely of Christians of other denominations, and composed also of Members who are not Christians at all. But the Church of England is not the only Established Church. There is another Established Church, which has neither of those limitations placed upon it. The Church of Scotland may have precisely what form of worship it pleases, and may alter its terms of subscription as it pleases. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes! It may define as it pleases the meaning which the subscription to the Westminster Confession carries with it. If the Gentlemen who are in favour of Disestablishment are in favour of it because it frees the Church, manifestly they must be more in favour of it in Scotland than in England. The fact is, that Establishment, as Establishment, is what moves the wrath of the Nonconformist bodies of this island, and that in Scotland before England they began the Disestablishment campaign; and it is the Scotch Church which they will attack before they will begin to try their teeth upon the English Church. Then does not the argument for liberty manifestly disappear? Does it not stand confessed and patent to all that it is not the liberty of the Church that is the true motive of the advocates of Disestablishment, but some other and different motive which lies at the bottom of the course which they commend to us to pursue? But in truth what should we say? Consider how hollow this is. We are told that the Church of England is bound in golden fetters. Yes; but if we saw somebody relieving a person entangled in golden fetters of those golden fetters, we might be tempted to think that liberty of the captive was his motive; but if the liberator proceeded afterwards to put the golden chain into his own pocket, and if, not content with putting the golden chain into his own pocket, he afterwards tore off, with violence and contumely, every other ornament with which the person he was thus attempting to relieve was invested, we should be tempted to say that plunder, and not liberation, was the object of his intentions. I am bound to say that when we consider the principal Provisions in this Bill which the Government have thought fit to introduce into it that idea is impressed more and more forcibly upon our minds. The most obvious intention in this Bill is not merely to free the Church, but to destroy it. ["Hear, hear!" *and cries of* "No" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] My reason for thinking so is that they have the parallel of the Irish Church before them. They saw that by the terms they had given to the Irish Church it was impossible, by great self-sacrifice, by great public spirit, to capitalise the sum which would prevent that Church from suffering so much as she might otherwise have done. And what have the Government done? They have determined that this Church shall have no terms like the Irish Church—that she, at all events, shall not be allowed to do for herself what the Irish Church has done with so much success. They have doomed her beforehand to death by a kind of creeping paralysis, in which parish after parish, by the accident of death, is to be deprived of its Endowments, in which each limb is to be cruelly destroyed in turn, till the whole organisation is paralysed so far as they can paralyse it, to absolute death. I am always disposed, I hope, to attribute not ungenerous motives to those to whom I am opposed, but it is difficult indeed to exercise charity when I look at the particular provisions by which the Government have endeavoured to carry out what they describe as a work of public liberation. And that is the case presented by hon. Gentlemen opposite for the destruction of the Church so far as the Church is concerned. But they have another argument. They tell us that it is necessary to destroy that Church for the sake of the people in Wales. And how do they demonstrate that proposition? In the first place, their argument is, that the existence of an Established Church conduces to a great want of charity and to a great friction between various sections of society and various sections of Christians. Surely, Mr. Speaker, this is a very strange argument. The Nonconformists, or at all events the political Nonconformists, of Wales come before us and tell us that all their evil passions are aroused by the existence of an Established Church. They tell us that they are driven to acts of want of charity, that they are driven to envy, and that they are driven to feel that there are social inequalities which ought to be smoothed down, and they say: "Remove this stumbling block, destroy that which we envy, take away from us this Church which arouses in us all these unhappy emotions, and then you will have a state of amicable peace in Wales, when every man will love his brother, and when every member of every sect will feel that, after all, he belongs to, and is bound together with, the members of every other sect in one great religious work." I do not think that argument ought to weigh with us. After all, the Church in Wales is one at this moment —I freely admit it—with a large number of organisations, all engaged in the greatest work which can be done among men. Is it impossible, without depriving that great organisation of means of usefulness, that co-operatively the work of spreading Christianity should go on unhindered? Is that asking too much of human nature, even of the human nature of certain political Nonconformists? Is it asking too much to allow us to hope that the time may come when every member of every denomination may use to the utmost the means placed at his disposal for a common work; when he may feel, not that he loses by some other denomination having its powers of usefulness increased, but that he and his fellows gain by such a condition of things? It would be impossible, and I think the House would not desire that I should attempt any survey of the comparative utility of the various Welsh denominations, and it is an invidious task which I do not wish to enter upon. But certain facts have been brought to my knowledge, and I believe they are authentic, which I should like briefly to give to the House, as to the sort of work which has to be done by all denominations in Wales, and which is now being done, so far as I can discover, more effectually by the Church of England than any other. I believe that in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan there are about 1,000,000 of inhabitants, the whole population of Wales being only 1,700,000. More than half the population of Wales are confined in those counties. So far as I can discover, you cannot put higher the adherents of all the Nonconformist bodies together, including infants, as more than 400,000. That leaves 600,000 who are either members of the Church of England or who belong to no religious denomination at all, and in regard to whom no religious work is being carried on. Is not that a great religious problem for all the religious bodies in Wales? It is admitted to be so by all the best Nonconformists, and I find that the chief of the Nonconformist bodies in that particular district is the Congregationalists; and they themselves admit, with a regret which we all share, that the increase in that body has not kept up even with the increase of population: while we find, on the other hand, in regard to the Church of England in those districts, that there has been progress by leaps and bounds—progress in the construction of churches, progress in the ordaining of clergy, and progress in the number of persons confirmed, which show that, at all events, the work in that particular district, the great work in which all bodies of Christians, conforming and nonconforming, are equally concerned, is being carried out more efficiently at this moment by the Church of England than by any other of its collaborating sects. [*Cries of* "No!"] The figures are there, and I can draw no other conclusion from them. The question I wish to put to every man who has come to this House to-night with the view of voting in favour of this Bill is this: Does he think he will further the great cause of religion among the growing masses in Wales by this Bill or does he not? I suppose that 99-100ths of this House believe that in every healthy civilisation the element of religion is absolutely necessary, and I suppose that nine-tenths of this House—perhaps the figure is too high—but, at all events, a large majority of this House do not differ from the tenets of the Church of England sufficiently to say that that great Christianising work ought not to be performed by her. If that be true, is it not a tremendous responsibility to take upon yourselves to vote that the Church which has got this work before it, which is doing its work by your own confession, and doing it well, or is helping you to do it and helping you well, is to be deprived of its means of usefulness? I make that appeal to the House at large. Perhaps I ought not to make it to those who have hitherto regarded the Church question as a political question, nor to those who insist, most unhappily, as I think, upon looking at our existing ecclesiastical controversies through the mists of prejudice born of the unhappy conflicts which have raged in times past in England. Those times have long gone by. Surely we may now all work in harmony for the common good, and those Nonconformists who take my view of the situation, who think with me that we may forget the wrongs, if you like, inflicted in times past and under a different state of things by the English Church upon those who differed from her, and who think with me that all denominations of Christians are called upon now in these times of changing populations, of great movement and great growth, to use their best efforts to further convictions which all share—surely they will think, as I think, that the Church in Wales now deserves something more than generous treatment at their hands. This, at all events, I am certain of: that, if misled by the memory of the unhappy past or by the prejudice born of the daily conflict of party and of sect, men earnestly desirous of furthering religion, yet vote for this Bill, they will find that, though they have inflicted a great—I will not say an irreparable—injury upon the Church against whom this Bill is directed, they have done nothing to benefit those denominations of Christians to which they belong, and that they have done very much indeed to destroy that work in which they, as well as we, might heartily join, and which might be for the permanent benefit of that part of the country whose interests they profess especially to have at heart.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby), said: I should have thought that the consideration which would have presented itself to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman when, in his eloquent peroration, he called upon all sections of all religious communities to co-operate in that common work would have been to feel that the first step in the direction of that co-operation would be to place all those communities, without invidious distinctions, upon a common footing. Is that opinion not shared even by Churchmen in Wales? I had put into my hands to-day a letter from a gentleman who signs himself "Edmund Jones, Warden of the Diocesan School of Divinity in Wales," and the conclusion of that letter is this:—

> "It is a reform that we want. It is quite hopeless to defend the present state of things as immaculate, and I do not shrink from saying in your columns that a large number of Welshmen, both Churchmen and Nonconformists, are longing to have some reasonable settlement of this vexed question, which has poisoned the social, religious, and political life of the Welsh nation for nearly half a century."

That is the view of a man who holds apparently a distinguished place in the Church of England in Wales. Then we have an evil in Wales that has to be dealt with, and the question we have to determine to-night is how that evil is to be dealt with. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that this long Debate has been in many respects interesting, and that it has been characterised by many brilliant speeches—some of them, I venture also to agree with him, not absolutely relevant to the vote that we are going to give to-night. We have had many historical disquisitions. Some of them, which have come from what is called the Church party, have surprised and, I venture to say, have amused us. They have their source in certain publications which have given to me an extremely novel and astonishing view both of history and of law. In these descriptions of Church government and the relations of Church and State there are some chapters in history which were entirely omitted. There is one event which in former days was considered of some importance which has entirely disappeared. It is the event which used to be known by the name of the Protestant Reformation. On reading the publications of the Church Defence Association you would imagine that Henry VIII. never existed, that Edward VI. was a minor, that Mary Tudor of Blessed Memory had never lived, and that Elizabeth had never reigned. All these personages, as far as Church and State are concerned, have disappeared from the scene. Nothing material happened in Church and State in the 16th Century at all, or nothing that signified particularly. Everything is just as it was before, and the Church of to-day is exactly the Church of the period before the Reformation—in doctrine, in discipline, and in the whole of the relations of Church and State. We know that well. It is like the axe which had a new head and a new handle, but was always the same axe. I confess that I am too old myself to have adopted these views of the relations of Church and State, but I shall not attempt at this hour to reproduce ideas which seem entirely to have gone out of fashion. All that, I think, is a good deal beside the question we have to decide to-night—the question of the Church in Wales and nothing else. That is the subject which the Government are responsible for placing before the House. The question we have to determine is not the general merits of Establishment or Endowment, but whether Establishments or Endowments are, under the present condition of things, advantageously applied to society as it now exists in Wales. I think the right hon. Gentleman himself has admitted that that is the question at which we should look, and I entirely agree with him. I decline altogether to be diverted from that consideration by the larger questions which have been extensively introduced in these Debates. But there are arguments of a character which, if they were well-founded, would debar us altogether from making any change in the Establishment as it now exists in Wales or elsewhere. It is true they have not been advanced by the Leader of the Party. He said he was not going to take the high line, and he has not taken the high line. I think his main argument was to stand upon the Statute of Limitations. What has become of the high line of the right hon. Member for Bristol, who opened this Debate, and of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth? I doubt whether the Party which the right hon. Gentleman so admirably represents are prepared to take what I may call the low line. I will not use that phrase—but the line which the right hon. Gentleman has adopted to-night. What has become of the "national sin?" What has become of the doctrine of the right hon. Member for Bristol—that it is absolutely essential that the State should be connected with the Church; that without the State the Church has no strength, and without the Church the State has no religion? That was the argument advanced—and I am quite sure sincerely held—by the right hon. Member for Bristol. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth said that Disestablishment and Disendowment was a national sin. It is necessary, at all events, that we should make up our minds whether that is a good plea or not, because if it is a good plea there is no use discussing the question at all. It has been stated, and I have no doubt is held by the Church party, that it is for the highest interest of the State, and that it makes the State more religious, to have an established Church. Is that true? [An hon. MEMBER: "Yes."] I know it is a firm belief, I should say of the majority of the Church party, that the existence of a Church gives a religious influence to a State. If that is so that is a conclusive argument; but is it true? When the Nonconformists went to New England, was New England less religious than England under Charles II.? Was the Church under the Stuarts the Church in its most religious form? When Penn went to Pennsylvania was Pennsylvania a less religious community because it had no Established Church? Canada had an Establishment and an Endowment; Canada has parted with it. Is Canada less religious than England? Are you prepared to say so? Are you prepared to say that of any of our colonies? Why, Sir, it is not true. Of the English race probably three-fourths, certainly two-thirds, are without an Established Church. Are you prepared to affirm that those communities are less religious than that to which we belong? Then, when you speak of Disestablishment as a national sin, I should like to know how far you are going to carry that doctrine. You have on the other side of the House, I know, a profound veneration and confidence in the House of Lords, but in the case of the Irish Church that assembly acquiesced, and the main instrument in carrying the Irish Church Bill through the House of Lords was Lord Salisbury, the present leader of the Tory party. He was supported by a man, whom certainly everybody who knew him would admit to be a most religious man—the late Lord Carnarvon; and another person who took a great part in the settlement of that great question was the late Duke of Devonshire, who made a speech on that occasion which anybody who wants a refutation of the argument of which I am speaking I would strongly recommend to read. Well, Sir, therefore I dismiss the argument, as the right hon. Gentleman has abandoned that argument.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I am sorry to interrupt, but I must not be supposed to abandon an argument because I do not repeat it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman explained the line of argument he was going to take when he said he was not going to take the high line. That is what I call the high line. Now, Sir, I do not pretend to argue the question of the merits of Establishment and Endowments in general. What we have to consider to-night is whether, in respect of a particular community—that is to say, the community of Wales—the Establishment and the Endowment is appropriate and politic as applied to that community. We have to consider two questions—one Disestablishment, the other Disendowment. Now, Establishment and Endowments are interdependent and inseparable in my opinion. I observe that the advocates of the Church generally in this debate have insisted a great deal more upon the question of Endowments than upon the question of Establishment, and that has been very characteristic, I think, of the Debate throughout. [An hon. MEMBER: "No."] Yes, I am quite sure that it is so, and a gentleman who spoke after dinner gave the reasons for it. The hon. and learned Member for the Epsom Division of Surrey said the Endowments are the breath of its life—the life of the Church. Now, Sir, I quite understand why that should be so. Indeed, there are many Churchmen who would gladly part with Establishment altogether. Everybody knows that, and it is natural, because Establishment is a restriction upon a Church, whereas Endowments are a benefit and a privilege, and it is quite easy to understand why people should lay much more stress and much more value upon that which is a privilege than upon that which is a restriction. What is Establishment? The ex-Home Secretary gave us a definition of it. He said:—

> "What did Establishment consist in? The supremacy of the Crown; the appointment of Bishops; the assembling and dissolving of Convocation; the control of the Crown over any canon that Convocation might pass; and in the interference of Parliament which followed from the supremacy of the Crown;"

and he might have added a good many other things too. Now, the change which had passed over the Church at the Reformation period in the Tudor reign was very much like the change which passed over the Monarchy at the time of the Revolution. The Church, like the Monarchy, became a limited institution, and that was the operation that took place at that time with regard to the Establishment. Now, the essence of Establishment is the control of the State over the Church. What is it that the Church gains by Establishment? The ex-Home Secretary, in the words I have read, showed plainly what the advantages are. It gains certain titles of honour; it gains in its prelates a distinctive costume—[*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"]—well, but it is so; and it gains also seats in the other House of Parliament. Really, beyond that I do not know what it is that the Church gains by Establishment. But the State insists on the Establishment as the co-relative and condition of endowment—and naturally so—and it imposes on the Church as a condition of imposing these endowments the fulfilment of laws prescribed by the State. Only one speaker in this Debate has insisted greatly upon one great feature of Establishment, and that was the ex-Home Secretary. He said:—

> "If you Disestablish the Church, the Queen will no longer be the supreme Head of the Church in Wales."

I was a little surprised at the quarter

from which that came. It seemed to me that it was hardly the voice of the Vatican, but was rather inspired by the Quirinal. I do not know whether it is a recollection of the day when the right hon. Gentleman, in a vicarious character, exercised the functions which belong to the supreme head of the Church of England, whether he assisted, as I have often done myself, at the homage of Bishops for their temporalities—a most interesting ceremony, and one which indicates that the Supreme Head of the Church has something to say to the temporalities of the Church. I dare say it is that recollection which induced the right hon. Gentleman to lay so much stress on the importance of the Crown being the Supreme Head of the Church in Wales. Well, when we come to the question of endowment, we come to the real fighting part of the case. I think anybody who has listened to this Debate must recognise that that is the fact. It is not a question of doctrine or discipline, but of money. Nobody can doubt that. But it is met by an objection—which would be fatal to the case of endowment if well founded—that the State has no right to deal with the property of the Church. That is asserted very confidently by the Church party. It was put forward by the right hon. Member for Bristol. He said :—

> "I care not what was done in Ireland. This House has no more moral right to take one penny of these endowments than it has to take the property of any Corporation, any trade union, or society in the country."

Very well; he may say he does not care what was done in the case of Ireland. But other people have to care. Lord Salisbury has to care. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh!"] Wait a minute; he voted, and it was his vote and interest that carried the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland. The Duke of Devonshire has something to say. But what was done in regard to the property of the Church in Ireland? The Duke of Argyll, the great vindicator of the rights of property, was a party to this act of public plunder and confiscation. The hon. Member for North Armagh was one of the confiscators of those days.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I voted against the Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Did you? Then I beg pardon. At all events, there is the right hon. Gentleman who has considered the case of Ireland; he has spoken to-night; and he had to explain his position. I am always rather sorry for anyone who finds it necessary to explain his position. He explained his position; and I do not know what the gentleman who held the doctrine of sacrilege and national sin thought of that explanation. They would have heard that the right hon. Gentleman was guilty of a national sin and committed sacrilege as a peace offering to soothe a discontented people. That was the explanation he offered to-night. He said, not that it was a national sin, but that it was a national sacrifice. He made a national sacrifice because Ireland was in such a state of disorder and discontent; and he used this other phrase, that he Disestablished and Disendowed the Irish Church in order to buy peace. Is that intended as a lesson for Wales? Is he going to say that if there was only discontent enough, if only Wales was in a condition in which it was necessary to buy peace, then he will be prepared to make a national sacrifice of the property of the Welsh Church? This is the way in which the right hon. Gentleman explained his position upon that subject. But, Sir, again I must agree with the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary. He said he did not think any advantage was to be gained by entering into the legal and moral right of Parliament to entertain such a question as this. Rather a rebut to the sentiments expressed by the right hon. Member for Bristol—

> "That right was beyond question, and precedents to support it were very numerous."

Certainly, and I think he added these words :—

> "He would not talk about sacrilege; there was abundant precedent in our history for Parliament interfering with the property of the Church."

Well, no one is in a better position to judge of that than a gentleman who belongs to the communion of which the right hon. Gentleman is a member. That is perfectly true, and it is perfectly idle at this time of day to question the right of Parliament to deal with the property of the Church. [An hon. MEMBER: "Oh, oh!"] Does the hon. Member think he is a better judge than the right hon. Member for East Birmingham? On the whole, I prefer his authority. I have heard it advanced in this House that the tithe was a voluntary gift of the landowners to the Church. If that is so, they must have been very different from the landowners of the present day. I have heard complaints made of the manner in which tithe is paid by landowners. On this point I will trouble the House with one extract of an historical character. There is an account given by Lord Coke, a good authority on the law and history of tithes; it will be found in Selden, the great antiquarian authority. This is what he says about the origin of tithes:—

> "When Gregory the Great sent Augustine, about the year 600, assisted by 40 preachers, to publish the Gospel to our forefathers in England, it is testified by the laws of Edward the Confessor among other things that he preached and commanded tithe to be paid. This St. Augustine preached and taught, and this was granted by the King, the Barons, and the people."

A pretty good description of statecraft. I do not see how you could describe statecraft in better terms. "But afterwards by the instigation of the devil—" I suppose he means the landlords—"they detained it and did not pay it." Selden says that when you come to Domesday Book it almost seems as if tithe had disappeared. Then, if this were a private grant by individuals, how comes it to be of general application? You do not find that in the case of private gifts. Where you find an obligation placed upon land which is universal and obligatory, it is perfectly idle to contend that that is a grant of private origin. Then, as to the right of the State to deal with these Endowments; I should like to know how these Endowments came into the hands in which they are found at present, if the State had not the right to deal with them. The right hon. Member for West Bristol, if I am not mistaken, is a distinguished *alumnus* of the great House of Christ Church, Oxford. Yes, Sir; but that great House is endowed with Welsh funds. How did Christ Church get hold of the Welsh tithes? I am afraid a part of them seems to have been devoted to the education of the right hon. Gentleman; a very good purpose, too, an excellent purpose, but I am afraid a national sin. Then there is another great collegiate institution which had the honour of educating the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. It had the honour, also, and a great honour it is, to have as one of its most distinguished ornaments the Member for the University of Cambridge, who always addresses this House with so much ability; and I, too, in a humbler capacity, was a partaker of its advantages. The whole of the Endowments of the great Foundation of Trinity College, Cambridge, is in tithes and land once devoted to ecclesiastical uses. Of course, everybody knows that it was by the act of the State that the tithes were given to these institutions. Reference has been made by the right hon. Gentleman to allusions which have been made to the lay impropriators. In this instance it was introduced by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Home Department, and I hope he has escaped the hereditary taint; but there are other persons who benefit by the right of the State to dispose of ecclesiastical property. When the Duke of Devonshire has rejected this Bill in the House of Lords, he will be able to go home to the moors which lie above Bolton Abbey, and my young and distinguished Friend, my Representative in the New Forest, has a magnificent home known as Beaulieu. How did they become possessed of these properties except by the right of the State to dispose of the property of the Church? But this case really has been settled by the case in Ireland, and it is idle, at this time of day, after such an Act as the Irish Church Act has been passed, to contest the right of the State. I do not say whether it was politic, or wise, or just to do it—to contest, as the right hon. Gentleman has contested it, the moral right of the State to deal with the property of the Church. I have been obliged to allude to these questions because they have been advanced in this Debate. I have been obliged to allude to the argument that the State ought to have an Established Church, and to the argument that the State has no right to deal with the property of the Church; but I perfectly agree that the question and the only question upon which we are going to pronounce a judgment to-night is whether it is right, politic, and wise to deal in this manner with the Church in Wales. That is the question and the only question. It is not a question of the policy of establishments generally; it is not a question of endowments generally. The question is whether it is to be applied to the social community in Wales, and I venture to affirm that a National Church ought not to exist in a community like Wales unless it represents the sentiments and convictions of the majority of the people. In old days, no doubt, the ground for a National Church was, that it represented the sentiments and convictions of the people; but in later days we have been obliged to adopt, and we do adopt, a more restricted view than that, and I admit that in a community where the majority of the people are in favour of the existing Established and Endowed Church, the argument would be strong and weighty in favour of maintaining that Church, and I should not be a party to any speculative view of establishments and endowments for disturbing that state of things. But is that the condition of things in Wales? The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to refute the arguments on this subject. He said he would not enter into any calculation, but he endeavoured to dispose of the arguments of the majority of the representatives of the people of Wales. I should like to apply that argument to the case of England. Supposing that in England you had the same proportion of persons as in Wales for and against Disestablishment, how long do you think that the Establishment would continue to exist? The right hon. Gentleman knows it would not exist for a day. There are about 460 Members for England. Supposing there were 420 against the Establishment and 40 in favour of it, do you think that the question would not be settled at once? The right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, endeavoured to-night—not very candidly, if I might say so—to cite against us the great authority of the right hon. Member for Midlothian. He read a passage from a speech made 20 years ago by my right hon. Friend, in which he said that there was a distinction between the case of the Church in Wales and the Church of England in Ireland. But the right hon. Member for St. George's ought to have referred to a speech made by my right hon. Friend in support of a Motion for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Welsh Church in 1891.

**Mr. GOSCHEN**: I did. I distinctly stated that the right hon. Gentleman had said at a later date that he bowed to the decision of the majority of the people of Wales.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: The right hon. Member for Midlothian said more than that. He said:—

> "In two vital and determining points the case of the Welsh Church corresponds with that of the Irish Church. In the first place, it is the Church of the few as against the Church of the many. In the second place, it is the Church of the rich as against the Church of the comparatively poor."

That is a good deal more than merely bowing to the majority, and my right hon. Friend went on to say:—

> "It is not very far from the truth to say that the Nonconformists are the people of Wales, undoubtedly the bulk of the people of Wales."

If that is true there is no justification for maintaining in Wales an Established Church. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said that the opinion of Wales may be changed at the next election. I doubt whether that is very likely, for what happened at the last Election? Of the Unionist candidates how many declared themselves in favour of the Church in Wales? There were 34 Unionist candidates, and out of those only 8—no, 5—declared in favour of the Church in Wales. In these circumstances is the opinion of Wales likely to alter on this subject? Twenty years ago very few votes were given in favour of Disestablishment. Every year there has been an increasing number. How, then, can you doubt what is the opinion of the majority of the people of Wales? It is said that the Church in Wales has greatly improved of late, and I am glad to know it has. Has that altered the opinion of the majority of the people of Wales? It has not. Why, concurrently with the improvement, the opinion of the people of Wales is as strong or stronger than it was before. Then the last argument that is addressed to us is, that it is so unfair to the Welsh Church to deprive it of its emoluments. What is the figure of these emoluments? The right hon, Gentleman the Member for Bristol put it at £157,000. Is that the sum on which the Church in Wales is prepared to come before the country and say that the absence of that sum will disable it from its religious duties? In the presence of what we know has been done by the Free Kirk of Scotland, in the presence of what has been done and is being done by the Nonconformists of Wales, is it possible to say that the Church that reaches the richest part of Wales would be for ever disabled from its religious work by the loss of such a sum of money as that? I cannot believe it. I am astonished that such an argument as that should be put forward. Is it likely that this will destroy the religious action or the religious influence of the Church in Wales? The evidence of the Church in Ireland is sufficient to satisfy us upon that point. The Church in Ireland has not suffered either in its wealth or in its means, or in its religious influence; and therefore, Sir, believing as we do that the case of the Church in Wales stands upon very much the same footing as that of the Church in Ireland — that it is not a Church which represents the sentiments or the convictions of the majority of the people, and that that is the condition upon which alone a national Church can stand, that it is the only condition which can justify Establishments or Endowments—being firmly of that conviction, we have taken the responsibility of asking the House of Commons to-night to determine that in Wales the Establishment and Endowment shall cease to exist.

The House divided:—Ayes, 304; Noes, 260.—(Division List No. 39.)

## DISTRESS BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill, which originated in the House of Lords,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. T. Reid, Dumfries) explained, that the object of the Bill was to enable the Judges of County Courts to cancel the certificates of bailiffs guilty of gross abuse of power.

Mr. S. T. EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid), thought the Bill was unnecssary. Not three months ago he appeared in a county court for a client who had been grossly misused by a bailiff, and succeeded in getting the man's certificate cancelled.

*Sir W. Harcourt.*

Sir R. T. REID assured his hon. and learned Friend that the Bill was necessary, as the existing provision was, owing to construction put upon it by the courts, found inapplicable. The result was that the County Courts were flooded with complaints from poor people of having been grossly illtreated by bailiffs and no redress could be given them.

Bill read 2°.

## MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

On the Order for the consideration of this Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee,

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, that as no attempt had been made to carry out the distinct promise given by the promoters of the Bill that it would be applied to Ireland, he should object to the consideration of the Bill.

Colonel LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham) said, he had made every inquiry, and found it was impossible that the Bill could be made applicable to Ireland. He hoped the hon. and learned Member would withdraw his objection.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: That is always said in the case of Ireland—it is impossible; but we will make it possible. I object.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Herbert Gardener, Saffron Walden) said, the Bill was a very useful Bill, and hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not insist on his objection.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I object.

Consideration of Bill accordingly postponed.

## PATENT DESIGNS AND TRADE MARKS ACTS (1883 to 1888) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. Fletcher Moulton, Bill to amend the Patent Designs and Trade Marks Acts, 1883 to 1888.

Bill presented accordingly, and read a first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 189.]

House adjourned at Thirty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, 2nd April 1895.*

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### CYPRUS.

Return respecting the Revenues of the Island of Cyprus laid before the House (pursuant to Order of the 15th of March last), and to be printed.—[No. 55.]

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION — PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

The following Bills were presented by Lord Kensington (for Lord Playfair) and read 1ª :—

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Acton to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 56.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Hornsey to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 57.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Manchester to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 58.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Liverpool to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 59.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Lowestoft to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 60.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act 1870, to enable the School Board for Pwllheli to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [No. 61.]

### GRAND JURIES (IRELAND) (No. 2.) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment: The Report of Amendments made in Committee of the whole House to be received on Thursday next.

### EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.—[H.L.]—[No. 62.]

AND

### EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES (No. 2.) BILL.—[H.L.]—No. 63.]

Reported from the Standing Committee with an Amendment to each Bill: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bills to be printed as amended.

### SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.—[H.L.]

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended [No. 64.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1.) BILL.

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

### LORD'S DAY ACT.

Moved,—That a Select Committee be appointed to consider what amendments it is expedient to make in the Lord's Day Act (21 Geo. III. c. 49).—(*Viscount Cross*):

Agreed to.

### PALESTINE EXPLORATION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH—in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what restrictions had been laid by the Turkish Government on British subjects travelling in Palestine and Syria; and whether any correspondence on the subject could be laid before Parliament—said: Some time ago it came to my notice that certain restrictions had been placed on travellers in Asia Minor. The subject is of some interest, because, as the House is aware, very important explorations have been going on for years, and have now reached a point when, speaking as a member of the Palestine Exploration Fund, I may say that we hope we are on the eve of still more important discoveries. This can hardly be regarded as a private enterprise, because some of the most distinguished *savants* in France and Germany have been engaged in the work, and our own Government have given at different times the services of such eminent men as Sir Charles Warren, Sir C. Wilson, and the late General Gordon. I will conclude by asking the noble Earl whether he can lay any papers on the Table.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (the Earl of KIMBERLEY): Early in February the Porte issued orders to the Government in Beyrout that travelling passports should not be granted to foreigners without authority, but when the inconvenience that would be caused by those regulations was pointed out the orders were at once withdrawn. That being the case, it seems to me that it will not be necessary to produce any correspondence, which, in fact, consists, only of one or two short telegrams.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH : The exploration can go on as it did before?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : I am not able to say. The explorations were not mentioned in the question upon the Paper, so I have not armed myself with information on that point. But as regards the permission to travel, matters remain in exactly the same position as before.

### CHITRAL.

VISCOUNT CROSS : I should like to ask whether any further information has been received by the Government from Chitral?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord REAY): The only information which has reached us is that Colonel Kelly had reached Pingal on March 28th.

House adjourned at a Quarter before Six o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 2nd April 1895.*

The House met shortly after Three of the clock.

### *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

On the Motion for the consideration of this Bill,

MR. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon) inquired whether there was any special complaint with regard to this company by the Board of Trade, either with regard to the Railway Servants' Hours Bill or the Traffic Acts of 1888 and 1894.

No answer being given,

MR. DODD, rising again, said: As there is no one here to answer, I object.

MR. SPEAKER : Order, order! The hon. Member has already spoken.

Bill ordered for 3°.

### GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for the consideration of the Great Eastern Railway Bill,

MR. DODD objected.

MR. SPEAKER : That cannot be done. The Bill is by order.

*MR. J. A. M. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow) who had given notice to move that the Bill be considered that day six months, complained strongly of a speech made by Lord Claud Hamilton, the Chairman of the Company, at the half-yearly meeting. He urged that, as the company had refused to co-operate loyally with the Board of Trade in giving effect to regulations laid down by Parliament, the House should not consent to give the company sanction to any further extension of its powers. He moved the rejection of the Bill.

MR. ARCHIBALD GROVE (West Ham, N.) seconded the Motion, and said that in dismissing 400 men from the employment of the company Lord Claud Hamilton said that "someone must suffer" for the legislation which had taken place. The action of the company, he argued, deserved the reprobation of the House. He instanced the case of an engine-driver who, after 22 years' service and with an irreproachable character, had been dismissed because he had been the spokesman of his mates. Shortly after he called the attention of the Board of Directors to a gross instance of fraudulent returns of hours of labour connived at by one of the local superintendents. One would have thought that the action of the Board of Directors would have been to have punished the superintendent who connived at this fraudulent return.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), on a point of order, asked whether it was in order for the hon. Member to call attention to these matters on the Bill now before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I should have thought it my duty to stop the hon. Gentleman had it not been for the remarks of the Chairman of the Company. I think that does give a reason for the course taken. But I think the particulars into which the hon. Member is now entering are outside the Bill, and are not relative to the immediate issue. There is nothing in the Bill with reference to the hours of labour, and I do not think the hon. Member can cite particular instances as a reason for punishing a company when they come to this House to ask for further powers.

Mr. GROVE said he would merely say that in this particular instance the man who violated the regulation of the Board of Trade was allowed to remain in his employment, and he believed that if a great Company sanctioned such conduct as that, it would convert the measures which that House passed into waste paper. He felt that the Great Eastern Railway Company, as a rule, behaved well to their employés, and that the foremen and the management set an admirable example to most of the Railway Companies throughout the country, but it was here, he feared, the spirit shown in Lord Claud Hamilton's speech might develop, and do harm, not only to the Company, but also to the public and the men in their employ, that he seconded the motion of his hon. Friend.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, that as one who had not the smallest pecuniary interest in the Great Eastern, but as one whose constituents were deeply affected by the line and the future prospects of the line proposed by this Bill, he hoped the hon. Member would not persist in his motion. He could quite understand the honourable motives which had led both the mover and the seconder to bring this question before the House. It affected, he had no doubt, men in whom they were most deeply and honourably interested, but he should like to point out that there was also a larger proportion of the population who were still more interested in the passing of this Bill. The Bill related principally to a branch railway in a district which at the present moment was in great need of railway accommodation, and it, moreover, affected a large body of the men in whom the hon. Members were interested, namely, the railway servants, because it provided for an extension of the pension scheme. He would ask them if, after expressing their opinion on the subject of the Chairman's speech, they might not think it compatible with their duty to withdraw their opposition. They had heard that the relationships between the Great Eastern and the Board of Trade had been of the most friendly character, and also that their treatment of their servants was in every way praiseworthy, and that being so, he would like to ask the hon. Members if they did not think it would be looking a little too far forward to prophesy as to what the future relationships between the Company and their servants might be. He felt so certain himself that the future of the Great Eastern must and would depend so largely upon the friendly relations between the Company and the men, that he could not think for one moment they would go behind the back of the law and do anything prejudicial to the interests of their employés.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) said, he did not feel altogether surprised that the remarks made by the Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway Company had given rise to a Debate. At the same time he very much regretted it, for it imported into the consideration of this Bill what ought to be considered only upon its own merits, an element which was, no doubt, of a controversial and, to some extent, of a painful nature. He read those remarks, and he thought they were not necessary. He thought they did not tend to make easier the duties of those who had had cast upon them by Parliament the very difficult function of endeavouring to apply an Act which was in the interests not only of railway servants but also of the whole travelling public, upon a subject which was especially difficult. It would be possible, by hasty, precipitate, or over-zealous administration to injure the railway servants themselves, and, at the same time, to embitter the relations, which ought to be cordial, between the Railway Company and the Board of Trade. They did their best to administer the Act in the spirit in which Parliament passed it, and in which they thought it ought to be administered. They did their best to prevent it from too suddenly imposing too heavy obligations on the Company, and at the same time to make it valuable as a means of relieving the men from excessive hours, and, further, of securing the safety of the public. He did not think it would be desirable to go beyond the ruling of the Chair and enter into the particular instances of contest and discussion which had arisen between the Great Eastern Railway Company and the Board of Trade. There had been, no doubt, a certain number of cases in which they had been unable to take the view the Company desired them to take, and the Company had not, so far, made the reduction the Board of Trade thought desirable. These matters, however, were not concluded, and he thought it would be going beyond the limits of the Speaker's ruling if he were to discuss them now. He therefore came to the question which was really raised by the Motion, that the Bill be rejected. He must observe upon that that it was extremely undesirable, for various reasons, that the House should take this opportunity of pronouncing an opinion upon the conduct of a Railway Company in matters which were not concerned in the Bill primarily before the House. This question of the hours of railway servants was one which had been put, in the first instance, into the hands of the Board of Trade with a view to bringing about a friendly solution, and the remedy provided in case a friendly solution was not arrived at was by proceedings before the Railway Commission. Parliament had, therefore, deliberately prescribed a method by which this question should be determined. In other words, it had removed it from the practical cognisance of this House, and it had, by implication, said that there were no matters of such a nature that should be raised on the Second Reading of these Bills.

*Mr. MACDONALD said, his point was that when a Railway Company, which had expressed a hostile opinion with regard to General Acts of Parliament regulating the conduct of its business, applied to Parliament for extended powers, then this House ought to take cognisance of the attitude of that Railway Company in determining whether the application should be granted.

Mr. BRYCE said he did not at all subscribe to the doctrine that because a Chairman of a Company said a certain thing the whole Company was to be prejudiced. If a Chairman had indulged in reflections upon the wisdom of Parliament in passing this Bill, it was no reason why they should depart from their own settled procedure and reverse their own policy in a matter so deliberately settled as this was settled by the Act of 1893. He could not assent to that distinction. But there was another thing to be said about this Bill. These Bills are not promoted exclusively in the interests of the Railway Company. They were promoted for the benefit of the general public as well. They were, in many cases, for better facilities for the working-classes getting to and from their work. They were very often Bills for increasing the means for the public safety, and for taking additional lines to improve their stations or their shunting yards, and in that way to provide it must be for the safety of their workmen. They were, perhaps, for the purpose of doubling their lines and running their trains upon an additional line so as to secure greater immunity from collision. Under these circumstances, they must not regard these Bills as solely in the interest of the Company, which they would punish if they rejected them. For these reasons he hoped his hon. Friend would not persevere in his objection, but would be satisfied with the attention he had drawn to the language of the Chairman of the Company, and to the unfortunate results which must follow if Companies were to set themselves in opposition to the deliberately adopted policy of Parliament.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, he was not concerned in the least in the Great Eastern Railway Company, except that he had the misfortune of living upon it. He spoke simply in the interests of the agricultural community. He would venture to suggest to the hon. Member who had made this motion that such speeches as the one to which he had called attention meant practically absolutely nothing. In this case nothing had been done after the speech of the Chairman which could in any way prejudice the employés of the Company. If the hon. Gentleman carried his Motion he certainly would not penalise the

Company. He would not do any harm to the Chairman, but he would do considerable harm to those men who were employed by the Company. He should have no objection to the Great Eastern Company receiving a lesson, for they charged the highest possible railway rates for agricultural produce, and they did not enjoy the wheeled arrangements which they called carriages which were run on their line. He thought none would deny that the county of Essex should have new communications and fresh facilities of transit, and it was absolutely necessary for the farming interest that these communications and facilities should be given and made. He therefore hoped the hon. Member would see fit, under the circumstances, to withdraw his Motion.

MR. C. DODD said, that he had not read the speech of the Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway Company, but he wished to have further imformation with respect to this Bill, whether the Board of Trade had any special ground of complaint against the Great Eastern Railway Company, either in regard to the enforcement of the Railway Servants' Hours Act, or the working of the Conciliation Clause under the Traffic Acts. The Standing Orders, giving directions to the Private Bill Committees, did not contain anything dealing with recent legislation. The Board of Trade had no power to enforce its views with respect to reasonable charges under the Traffic Act, and the House ought to support the Board of Trade where the Company showed itself to be absolutely unreasonable. Again, with regard to the hours of railway servants, wherever a company had refused to attend to the reasonable requirements of the Board of Trade, the House would be informed of the fact when it was being asked to confer further powers upon that Company.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) thought the House would have no difficulty in supporting the President of the Board of Trade with respect to this particular Amendment, but some protest ought to be entered against the practice obtaining in some quarters of the House of introducing, under cover of an Amendment, to resist the passage of a Private Bill, controversies of a more or less political character. The Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway Company did not need anyone to defend his reputation. He had been a highly-respected Member of the House off and on for many years, but as far as the passage quoted from his speech was concerned, the noble Lord deserved more than the faint praise by which he had been damned by some of his defenders. The noble Lord was not only within his right, but within the limits of his duty, in placing before his shareholders matters which he thought deserving of their consideration. If such a person, occupying a position of public responsibility, were to be cramped in the expression of his mind to his own shareholders, it was carrying any supposed ideas of privilege to a very far pitch. He thought the remarks of the noble Lord were fully justified. No doubt he was speaking from full knowledge, and as the result of inquiry; and, if he had not been straightforward to his shareholders, he would have deserved their censure. Were the proceedings of the House to be delayed, and its time occupied by political controversies arising out of the meetings of Directors and shareholders of public companies? If there was anything in the Bill to which any hon. Gentleman took exception the House would hear him, but he hoped the present Motion would not be taken as a precedent for re-thrashing out questions on which Parliament had already decided.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, that the principle laid down by the hon. Member for the Maldon Division could not be allowed to pass without challenge. It was that when a railway company failed to agree with the President of the Board of Trade and his subordinates, it was to be penalised when it came to Parliament for further powers. He could not understand hon. Members who called themselves Liberals complaining of the remarks made by the Chairman of a Railway Company in criticism of an Act of Parliament or of a Public Department. How was it possible to get foolish Acts—of which there were some—and mischievous Acts—of which there were many—repealed unless public attention was called to them? He thought it was the doctrine of the Liberal Party above all others that it was the business of those who objected to any law to go on agitating until it was repealed. Why should an official, such as the noble Lord, whose every Act had to be submitted to the Board of Trade, be debarred from calling attention to the action of that Department? He entirely agreed with the noble Lord that a great deal of the action of the Board of Trade was ill-advised, and ought not to be taken.

Mr. C. B. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, that he did not complain of the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, but he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give no encouragement to the principle laid down by the hon. Member for the Maldon Division. The right hon. Gentleman must see that to do as the hon. Member asked him to do would be for an Executive Department to decide *ex-parte* on the very questions which Parliament had said should be referred to a judicial tribunal—the Railway Commission.

*Sir C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, that he presumed the President of the Board of Trade, though not answering the questions which had been raised now, would do so when the general matter came under discussion. [Mr. Bryce signified assent.] On that understanding, the question could be allowed to pass now.

*Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) thought that this Motion was a gross abuse of Parliamentary privilege. On a Bill which contained nothing in reference to these matters the Motion raised a question which was decided by the House of Commons last year on entirely different lines. It not only asked the President of the Board of Trade to introduce an alien subject, but also to say that the persons with whom he disagreed were absolutely in the wrong. A method was provided for settling a dispute between the Board of Trade and the Railway Companies by a reference to the Railway Commission, and it would be asking the President of the Board of Trade to do a grossly unfair act if he were asked to say that the Companies with whom he was in dispute were in the wrong.

*Mr. J. A. M. MACDONALD said, that the question which he had raised was in no sense a personal one, but a large and general question, of which the House might well take cognisance. The speech of the hon. Baronet and the right hon. Gentleman opposite made it hard for him to withdraw his Motion, for he still thought that the attitude assumed by the Chairman and Directors of the Great Eastern Railway Company ought to be taken notice of by the House. But he would consent to withdraw, in view of the speech of the President of the Board of Trade.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### HAND AND MOULD-MADE PAPER.

Mr. ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in the Schedule of Paper, referred to in the circular letter of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, dated 14th February, 1895, the term hand-made or mould-made, occurring in Item 94, is intended to refer to paper made on moulds worked by machinery; and, if so, whether, seeing that the instruction which follows — namely, hand-made to be marked on wrapper, inflicts an injury on the makers of genuine hand-made papers, and contains an inducement to makers of mould-made papers by machinery to misname their productions as hand-made, he will cause the schedule to be revised?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): The Stationery Office, having satisfied itself that papers of qualities formerly produced only by the process of hand-making, are now produced also by mechanical processes, has lately, when requiring papers for uses for which "hand-made" alone were formerly supplied, invited alternative tenders for papers of the same weight and material either "hand-made" or "mould-made." The latter phrase is intended, as suggested in the question, "to refer to paper made on moulds worked by machinery." By an oversight the words "or mould-made," when introduced into the specification, were not inserted, as they should have been, in the direction for marking the wrappers. Instructions have been given to correct the error.

### IRISH SOLDIERS AND THE SHAMROCK.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Irish soldiers belonging to the 22nd Company, Royal Artillery, central district, and to the 1st and 8th Companies, western district, Malta, were ordered on St. Patrick's Day to remove from their helmets the shamrock which they wore in honour of the national festival of Ireland; and, if so, upon what authority the order was given; and whether it is intended to deprive Irish soldiers of the right to wear the emblem of their country upon St. Patrick's Day?

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): As I stated two years ago, in this House, permission to wear a national emblem rests entirely with officers commanding units, who are authorised to exercise their discretion as occasion arises. No report has been received of the circumstances referred to in the question; and there is no reason to suppose that the discretion of the Commanding Officers was not properly exercised. We know nothing of the facts?

Mr. W. REDMOND asked if the right hon. Gentleman would be good enough to make inquiries as to the facts alleged in the question?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that the hon. Member was good enough to show him a letter setting forth the complaint. He did not think that on the strength of that letter he could well interfere. He had not received any complaints of the same kind from any other quarter, and although the feelings of the hon. Gentleman's correspondent were hurt it was on a small scale—he did not mean that the feelings were hurt on a small scale but that the transactions were on a small scale—and he did not think he would be justified in interfering.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the grounds he had for putting the facts of this question to him were altogether different to those stated in the letter referred to.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that if that was so, he would make inquiries into the circumstances.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had said he had not received any complaint from any other quarter. He had given notice of a similar question for next Thursday.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It has not reached me.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It is on the Paper of the House.

Mr. W. REDMOND: May I ask how soon the right hon. Gentleman expects to be able to reply?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It will be some time, seeing that communication has to be made with Malta.

Mr. W. REDMOND: How long?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A month or six weeks.

## MOMBASA RAILWAY AND SLAVERY.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the fact that terms have been now concluded with the Imperial British East Africa Company, will take steps to construct a railway from Mombasa towards Lake Victoria Nyanza; what number of slaves up to the present time have been engaged at Zanzibar as porters upon which a deposit has been paid to the Government agent under the Proclamation of 17th October, 1894, and what is the amount of the deposit; and whether the representatives of Her Majesty's Government at Zanzibar have yet reported as to the best method of promptly terminating the institution of slavery; if not, when was the Report asked for, und when is it expected?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The terms offered have only just been accepted by the East Africa Company, and I cannot add to the answer which was given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day. We have no information as to the second paragraph of my hon. Friend's question. The despatch to Mr. Hardinge, instructing him to send the Report in question, was sent on the 27th of November last; the Report was received last Wednesday. Mr. Hardinge has since telegraphed to ask that a final decision as to the steps to be taken may be postponed till further information which is being collected has been received. The Vice Consul is now taking up his residence at Pemba, about the interior of which nothing has hitherto been known, and we expect to receive further and important information from him.

### BAD WEATHER AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether, considering the very great decrease in the average attendances at schools in the remote districts of Scotland caused by the storms of last winter, and the consequent loss of grants to School Boards, these grants and the Probate Duty paid in lieu of school fees might this year be paid on the average attendance of last year.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I have already stated how far we can make allowance for exceptional circumstances in regard to weather by permitting a proportionate deduction from the required number of attendances if a school has to be closed by stress of weather, and also by allowing the register not to be marked in exceptional circumstances. But it would not be in the power of the Department to pay grants on the basis of the average attendance of last year.

### CANTEEN SUPPLIES IN CORK.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the General Commanding the Cork district has issued an order directing that every Corps and Regiment shall, from the 1st proximo, obtain its canteen grocery supply from a firm in Cork; and, if so, whether such order is justified by the regulations of the Service, and by what authority can a General Commanding give this preference to a particular firm?

MR. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to recent orders issued by the General Commanding the Cork District (and which includes the City of Limerick), that henceforth all canteen supplies should be obtained from a Cork firm; is he aware that this order has excited great dissatisfaction throughout every garrison town in the south of Ireland; and whether he will cause this order to be withdrawn?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Queenstown Town Commissioners on Friday last, protesting against the order recently issued by the General Commanding the Cork District, directing that in future canteens, groceries, and other stores be supplied by a Cork firm; and whether, in view of the serious injury which such an order must inflict upon local traders, he will recommend the Military Authorities in Cork to consider the desirability of cancelling it?

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he had received a copy of the resolution adopted by the Town Commissioners of Fermoy with regard to this order; and whether this order, if carried into effect, will not only act prejudicially to the interest of the soldier, but also affect the traders in small garrison towns in Ireland.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): That is a repetition of the three questions on the Paper. I ask the hon. Members to take the one answer to them all. The general principle as regards canteens is that they manage their own affairs and obtain their supplies where they can be had most advantageously for the soldiers; and I should view with regret any large departure from a system under which considerable local relations subsist between the troops and the townspeople in their neighbourhood. At the same time it is the duty of a General Commanding to see that the canteens of his district are so administered as to give the greatest benefit to the soldiers for the money they expend. In the Cork district it was found that, in many cases, goods were supplied, especially at outlying stations, at prices much higher than those at which large firms were ready to deliver goods of equal or superior quality; and, while leaving for local markets the large items represented by milk, vegetables, eggs and malt liquors, as well as by the extra meat and bread, the General decided to concentrate into one order the demands of the different canteens for the several other articles, and to entrust, in each case, the supply to some one firm—not necessarily in Cork. No monopoly was created, and no contract made; but a comparison of prices between different firms was to be made monthly, and the

Order was given for one month only. I give the General Officer Commanding the greatest credit for the efforts he has made to reduce the price and enhance the quality of the goods supplied to regimental canteens in his district. The result has been, I am informed, an improvement in quality, and a reduction in price amounting, in some cases, to 53 per cent. I do not wish, however, to disguise my opinion that it is better that the canteens should manage these matters for themselves; and, if the Canteen Committees do their duty, I see no reason why they should not realise equally satisfactory results by adopting the same methods.

Mr. FLYNN inquired if the order of the Commander would remain in force notwithstanding the right hon. Gentleman's own views on the question, and whether he was to understand that there would not be any monopoly confined to any particular firm or firms.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Certainly not, and the arrangement is made for a month only.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.) asked if any complaints had been received by the military authorities in Cork as to the price and quality of the goods supplied by the local traders, and if a similar order had ever been issued in the Cork district.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN was not aware of that, because, as he had said, the general principle had been that each Canteen Committee should manage this matter themselves. In this case it had been found that the prices being paid were largely in excess, and the prices paid sometimes to suppliers outside the district altogether were largely in excess of the prices at which the same articles could be obtained. He might add that the quality had been greatly improved. It was found that a large number of canteens were obtaining and selling margarine as butter.

Mr. E. CREAN (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked if local traders were precluded by this order from competing.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not at all. As he understood, there was no open invitation for traders, but the different price lists of firms were compared, and action was taken on that.

Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) inquired whether, in this instance, the complaints had originated with the troops or with the shopkeepers.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked what was the practice in England. Had any English General told the Army they must all buy of the Army and Navy stores?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, there was no question of the Army and Navy stores. The goods were obtained from traders in the district, and he had already said it was a new departure on the part of an energetic, public-spirited General commanding the district, who saw his way to accomplish, and had accomplished, considerable benefit for the soldier by this process. He had already expressed the opinion that he thought it was the sounder system to allow each Canteen Committee to manage its own affairs.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Has this experiment ever been tried in England?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already said this is a new departure.

## CASTLEREA AND BALLAGHADERREEN RAILWAY.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has yet forwarded to the promoters of the Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway any reply to the answer forwarded by them to the Treasury Memorandum?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: I have today forwarded the desired reply to my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who will no doubt communicate it to the parties interested.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolution passed at the large meeting held in Loughglynn on Sunday last, in favour of the Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway, both as a relief work and one opening up a large district of country; whether he is aware that the engineer of the line has stated that the amount to be spent on labour in a thickly-populated district would be £60,000; and whether, with the view of providing employment during the summer, he will recommend the Treasury to grant the comparatively trifling guarantee asked for?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (for Mr. J. MORLEY): A copy of the resolution referred to in favour of the proposed railway has been received. It contains a statement that £60,000 of the £80,000, the estimated cost, would be spent on labour. Without expressing an opinion on the merits of the case, I may say that the Chief Secretary has been in communication with the Treasury, who inform him that they have no funds available for fresh guarantees under the Act of 1883, and that even if they had the proposed purpose is not one to which they could legally contribute under that Act.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) if a guarantee under the Tramways Act for a railroad from Ballaghaderreen to Castlerea has been refused by the Treasury; (2) if the sum asked for is only £600 a year; (3) whether he is aware that an enormous number of people in the locality are in favour of this line; and (4) if the Midland Great Western Railway Company has offered to work the line on favourable terms?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: The answer to the first paragraph of the question is yes. The Treasury have no funds available for fresh guarantees under the Act of 1883, and, even if they had, the project in question is not one to which they could legally contribute under that Act. The contribution asked for by the Grand Jury of County Roscommon was 2 per cent. per annum on a guaranteed capital of £80,000. As regards local feeling, I have little or no information, but I may mention that the Treasury have received protests against the guaranteeing of the proposed line both from the Guardians of the Boyle Union and from the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company. I have no information as to the terms offered by the Midland Great Western Railway Company for working the line.

## HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he has had brought under his notice the fact that the Irish Coast between Kingstown and Belfast is without a harbour of refuge; and whether, in view of the fact that the harbour of Skerries, county of Dublin, is most conveniently situated and naturally fitted for the purposes of a harbour of refuge, and also of the necessity for a harbour of refuge at that part of the Irish Coast, he will consider the advisability of providing in the Estimates for the comparatively small sum of money which would be required for rendering Skerries Harbour fit to meet that necessity?

MR. J. BRYCE: Successive Governments have repeatedly stated that their policy has uniformly been to refuse to construct Harbours of Refuge, except in cases of Imperial and National necessity, and this policy, when challenged in this House, has always been supported by the House. I fear, therefore, that I cannot hold out any hope that it will now be reversed.

## FISHERIES COMMITTEES.

MR. ELLIOTT LEES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether his attention has been called to the hardship imposed upon fishermen representatives nominated to serve upon Fishery Committees, in that no provision is made for the payment of expenses incurred by them in attending the meetings of such Committees, whereas the expenses of county and borough representatives may be paid for out of the rates; whether he is aware that the utility of Fishery Committees is frequently impaired by the non-attendance of practical men such as the fishery representatives, who are unable to give up sufficient time to attend the Committee meetings unless their expenses for attendance are paid; and whether he will take any action in the matter?

MR. BRYCE: The question of the payment of the expenses of fishery members of these Committees, when attending the meetings within their district, has frequently been brought to the notice of the Board of Trade. There are, however, so many difficulties connected with the subject that it has not been found possible to make any provision for such payment out of public moneys. It is not the fact that the expenses of County Council members are paid out of the rates, and though I believe that the expenses of Borough Council members are in some cases allowed, it does not follow that they come out of the rates, for they may come out of the borough funds. The expenses of all members deputed to attend the annual meeting at the Board of Trade may be paid out of the rates on the same principle, as in the case of Poor Law Conferences.

MR. ELLIOTT LEES asked how the expenses of County Council representatives were paid?

MR. BRYCE said, that when anything was paid it was paid on the understanding with the Local Government Board that the Auditor allowed the expenditure. That was the only way in which it could be done.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES inquired if there was any legal difficulty in the way of paying the expenses of fishermen out of the rates?

MR. BRYCE believed legal difficulties had occurred, but he had no sympathy with them.

## THE INDIAN FRONTIERS.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what official maps of India show for each of the years 1858-9, 1874-5, 1884-5, and 1894-5, the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, for the purposes of Section 55 of 21 and 22 Vic., c. 106, the Act for the Better Government of India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds), replying in the absence of Mr. H. H. FOWLER: No official maps are in existence to show the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Dominions, with reference to Section 55 of the Act for the Better Government of India.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India (1) how much of the following sums, namely, Rx.159,116, Rx.2,121,086, Rx.116,055, Rx.4,825, and Rx.143,730, shown under the heading of "Expeditions and Explorations, Expenditure in the Military Department," in a Parliamentary Return entitled "East India (Military Expenditure beyond the Frontiers)," and dated India Office, February 1895, relates to Military Expeditions beyond the West and North-west Frontiers of India; and (2) whether expenditure on Military Expeditions beyond the West and North-west Frontiers of India is included within the words of Clause 55 of the Act for the Better Government of India, namely, Expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions; and, if not, upon what grounds?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: A Return of the 8th June 1894, No. 20, East India (Military Expenditure) shows the occasions on which the expenditure referred to was incurred, and its amount under each head. It will be seen from that Return that in 1884-5 the bulk of the expenditure was incurred at Quetta in connection with the demarcation of the Russo-Afghan frontier; and that in the three years 1888-89 to 1890 there was expenditure on the Black Mountain expeditions and also in the last of those years on an expedition against the tribes on the Miranzai border. As to the second paragraph of the question, the Secretary of State has nothing to add to the explanation given on the 28th March in answer to a similar question of the hon. Baronet's.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Military operations in Afghanistan, involving during the years 1878-9 to 1882-3 an expenditure of Rx.18,190,132, as shown in a recent Parliamentary Return, were Military operations carried on beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, within the meaning of Section 55 of 21 and 22 Vic., c. 106, an Act for the Better Government of India; whether the consent of Parliament was obtained for the expenditure on these Military operations of the following sums: Rx.600,270 in 1878-9, Rx.4,642,143 in 1879-80, Rx.11,297,926 in 1880-1, Rx.1,631,924 in 1881-2, and Rx.17,869 in 1882-3 (shown in the Parliamentary Return above referred to); and upon what date, with reference to each of the sums mentioned in the previous question, was the consent of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords, respectively, obtained for such expenditure?

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether and upon what date was the consent of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords respectively obtained for the application of the revenues of India to defray the expenses of Military operations in Egypt, being

Rx.1,176,142 in 1882-3, and Rx.47,874 in 1883-4, as required by Clause 55 of the Act for the Better Government of India; and whether and upon what date was the consent of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords respectively obtained for the application of the revenues of India to defray the expenses of the annexation of Upper Burma, the military operations connected therewith involving the following expenditure, Rx.631,000 in 1885-6, Rx.1,517,800 in 1886-7, and Rx.1,475,300 in 1887-8?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The following are the dates of the Resolutions in both Houses of Parliament, under which, in accordance with Section 55 of the Act for the Better Government of India, the expenditure mentioned in my hon. Friend's questions was incurred:—Military operations: Afghanistan, Lords, 10th December, 1878; Commons 17th December, 1878. Egypt, Lords 25th July, 1882; Commons, 31st July, 1882. Burma, Lords and Commons, 22nd February, 1886.

### IRISH LIGHT RAILWAYS.

MR. J. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury (1) whether his attention has been directed to the numerous resolutions passed by the Strokestown Board of Guardians in favour of a railway from Dromod to Strokestown; (2) whether this project has received the sanction of the Roscommon Grand Jury; (3) whether he is aware that the promoters of the line stated that the amount to be spent on labour in a thickly populated district would be about £60,000; (4) whether he is aware that a great number of people in the locality are in favour of this line; and (5) whether, with the view of providing employment during the summer, he will recommend the Treasury to grant the comparatively trifling guarantee asked for?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I cannot find that any Resolutions of the Strokestown Board of Guardians in favour of this Railway have reached the Treasury. I understand that the Roscommon Grand Jury sanctioned the project 10 years ago, but that it was not approved by the Privy Council at that time and has not since been revived. The Estimate for the line was reported by the Board of Works' Inspecting Engineer in 1885 to be £75,000. I have no information as to the state of local feeling towards the project. As regards the last paragraph of the question, I can only say that the funds available for guarantees under the Light Railway Acts are already exhausted.

### DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether an inspector from the Congested Districts Board has visited the congested districts of Beihey, Keeldoa, and Cattan, in South Leitrim; whether he has recommended any remunerative works to be undertaken there; whether he can state what is the total amount expended by the Congested Districts Board in South Leitrim; and whether, as the people in the above districts are in a great state of destitution, and many obliged to seek outdoor relief, he can recommend the immediate starting of relief works?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. T. SHAW, Hawick Burghs), answering in the absence of Mr. J. MORLEY: An inspector has recently visited the districts referred to in the first paragraph, and has made to the Congested Districts Board a report which, like all such documents, are regarded as confidential. It will, however, be considered by the Board as soon as possible. Some bulls and swine have been sent to South Leitrim, and a poultry farm has also been established there. No other expenditure has been incurred up to the present in respect of this portion of South Leitrim. The Local Government Board inform me that their inspector will proceed to-morrow to the districts in question and report upon the condition of the people there.

### REDEMPTION OF RENT ACT, IRELAND.

MR. J. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Patrick Bourke, of Drimcurn, County Galway, filed an originating notice, under the Redemption of Rent Act, on the 19th April 1892; and that though the landlord, Joshua Seward, filed a consent to the redemption on the 29th April 1892, the order for redemption was only made on the 12th December 1893, since when the redemption has not been carried out; and whether he can state the cause of the delay?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND: The facts are as stated in the question. I am informed that the delay which occurred between 19th April 1892 and 12th December 1893 was caused by the lessee failing to supply the necessary proofs as to payment of rent; and that the delay which subsequently occurred was owing to the death of the lessor and the failure of his representatives to lodge an abstract of title until last month.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of Protestant members of the Royal Irish Constabulary who are stationed at places where they have to walk 12 or 14 miles to Divine Service on Sundays; how many constables have been so stationed over 12 months contrary to the regulations; and whether steps will be taken to have the regulations in this connection complied with.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND: The Inspector General informs me that it is a rule of the Service that a man shall not, if it can be avoided, be left at a remote station which is not within reasonable distance of his place of worship for a longer period than 12 months, and officers are instructed to call attention to such cases in order that any disadvantage under which individual policemen might labour in this respect should be remedied by removal to another locality. To obtain the information required by the hon. Gentleman would, I understand, entail a correspondence with every officer in the Force, and this would occupy some time. If, however, he has reason to believe that the rule to which I have referred has been disregarded in any particular case and will privately communicate with me in the matter, further inquiry will at once be made.

## PARISH ELECTION.

MR. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Parish Councillors Election Order, put out by the Local Government Board, does not adapt or alter the Municipal Elections Act, 1884, sufficiently to give a simple or cheap procedure for the trial of disputed Parish Elections, inasmuch as a formal petition, the presence of a barrister to represent the the Public Prosecutor or Attorney General, and the like are necessary in the case of Parish Council disputes; and that, in several cases where clear ground existed for upsetting elections, no action could be taken because of the expensive procedure provided; and if he will consider the matter with a view to publishing an Order better adapting the Act named to such elections?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I am aware that there is not at present a simple or cheap procedure for the trial of disputed elections of Parish Councillors. I have, however, no information as to whether there have been cases where clear ground existed for upsetting elections, but no action could be taken because of the expense of the procedure. When preparing the Regulations for the elections in December last, I was advised that the Local Government Board were not empowered to make any fundamental changes in the Municipal Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1884; but as the question is not free from doubt, I propose to take the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown as to the powers of the Board in the matter. If they should be of opinion that the Board have the power, I will consider what amendments can be made in the Order.

## ORDNANCE STORE CORPS.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether the Warrant for re-organising the Ordnance Store Corps will be published during the sitting of Parliament; and, whether the principle involved in the Warrant will be the creation of upper and lower classes of British officer, the upper class being given higher pensions than attainable regimentally, while the lower class will have to give five years' extra service without increase of retired pay?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No decision has yet been arrived at with regard to a re-organisation of the

Ordnance Store Department; but the subject, which involves many issues, is under consideration.

## THE NEW CODE.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether he can assure the House that the objections taken to the alteration of the history syllabus in the new Code will be favourably considered, and managers and teachers relieved from their anxiety as to the effects of the change?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W. R., Rotherham): A Minute was laid on the Table last Friday, re-instating the history syllabus of the previous Code as an alternative to that of the new Code, and will be in the hands of hon. Members in a day or two. This will, I hope, completely meet all objections.

MR. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education—(1) whether he will issue an instruction to Her Majesty's inspectors authorising them to accept the history syllabus prescribed in the Code of 1894, as an alternative course to that prescribed in the Code of 1895, and will cause such instruction to be embodied in the present Code; and (2) whether he can hold out any hope that in the future reasonable notice will be given of intended changes in the Education Code when such changes necessarily involve extensive alterations in the text-books already in use.

MR. ACLAND: I have already laid a Minute on the table re-instating the history syllabus of the Code of 1894, as an alternative to that of the new Code, and it will be in the hands of hon. Members within a day or two. This Minute will become part of the new Code, and no further instructions to inspectors will therefore be necessary. In reply to the second paragraph of the hon. Member's question, it is difficult always to give notice of such change as involve alterations in the text-books already in use; but, as far as I am concerned, this matter will be given due consideration in future, in the case of large and important changes.

*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*

## CESS AND STENT.

MR. W. WHITELAW (Perth): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, if he can now state when he will be able to introduce the Bill on cess and stent?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross): The Bill involves a good deal of detail, and it has required careful adjustment, but I hope to be able to introduce it before the Recess.

## ROADS AND FOOTPATHS IN INVERNESS-SHIRE.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, if he will consider the desirability of giving without delay to the outlying districts of Inverness-shire the intended grant for roads and footpaths, so that the expenditure of this money for labour may enable those of the people in destitute circumstances to purchase seed, grain, and potatoes for use this spring?

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: The Scotch Education Department has been consulted as to the districts in which it is most necessary to provide footpaths for school children. The necessary inquiries are being made, and the funds will be allocated in Inverness-shire and elsewhere when full information is obtained.

DR. MACGREGOR: I trust the right hon. Gentleman will remember that what is done quickly is done twice.

## LOCHMADDY COMBINATION POOR-HOUSE.

DR. MACGREGOR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that complaints have been made, through the Press and otherwise, of the insanitary state of the combination Poorhouse at Lochmaddy, North Uist; and if he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter?

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: The absence of water supply in Lochmaddy Poorhouse has been repeatedly reported. Windmills erected for pumping have been blown down, and all water used must be carried. A special water district is now proposed for Lochmaddy, and it is hoped that the Poorhouse may be included. The attention of the House Committee was called to the sanitary state of the Poorhouse on March 15, on a report by the Medical Officer. I have only got the answer by telegraph, as the question was only on the Paper this morning.

### TREATY OF BERLIN.

MR. J. AIRD (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, having regard to the recent massacres and terrible events which have been reported from Armenia, he will have circulated to Members copies of the Berlin Treaty?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Treaty of Berlin was laid before Parliament in 1878, and will be found under Turkey No. 44 of that year. In view of the fact that it covers 29 pages of print and consists of 64 Articles, of which only one, the 61st, refers specially to the Armenians, Her Majesty's Government considers that it is unnecessary to republish the document.

MR. AIRD suggested that, at all events, Article 61 of the Treaty might be circulated.

SIR E. GREY: As the whole Treaty is quite accessible, it is hardly necessary to do so.

### ARMY OFFICERS ON LEAVE.

MR. R. PIERPOINT (Warrington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of a regiment serving in India who are at home on leave, in case the regiment is detailed for service in the field, though expected to rejoin without delay, have besides sacrificing their leave to pay their own passages out unless they are recalled by an order of the Adjutant General in India?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are as stated in the question; but even if recalled by the authorities in India it would be a question for the India Office whether the circumstances would justify an officer's passage being granted at the expense of the Indian Government. It is a well-understood rule that if an officer, whose regiment is abroad, comes home for his own convenience he must rejoin his regiment at his own expense whenever required to do so.

MR. PIERPOINT asked whether the Indian Government ever had, in the circumstances stated by the right hon. Gentleman, allowed the expenses of an officer's passage out to India?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware they have got the power to do it.

### THE "ARMY LIST."

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that Messrs. Harrison and Sons, who are the contractors for printing the "Monthly Army List," have sublet the contract for printing the "Monthly Army List" to Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, although it is imprinted: "Printed by Harrison and Sons, St. Martin's Lane;" and whether he has satisfied himself that the Government printers, Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, do not pay Trades Union rate of wages?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: The printing of the "Monthly Army List" forms part of the work provided for by the contract for general War Office printing, which was granted after competition to Messrs. Harrison in 1887—that is, before the passing of the House of Commons Resolution. This is one of the contracts which will expire in 1896, and will be inquired into by the proposed Committee. I am informed that Messrs. Harrison have handed over the work of printing the "Monthly Army List" to Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, but that it is not a case of sub-letting in the ordinary sense, inasmuch as Messrs. Harrison pay over to Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode the whole of the receipts and retain no pecuniary interest themselves. Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode have two establishments, one worked under Trade Union rules and one not; but in the latter establishment they claim to pay rates of wages fully equal to the Trades Union scale.

MR. FIELD asked whether the "Army List" was printed in the non-Union establishment?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I understand that it is.

### PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

MR. W. ALLEN (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that the chairmen of certain parish meetings have ruled that it is unnecessary for the trustees of parochial charities to lay a copy of their accounts, similar to that which the Charitable Trusts Amendment Act directs shall annually be sent to the Charity Commissioners, before the parish meeting; and whether this ruling is in accordance with the law; and, if not, whether he will issue some instructions for the guidance of chairmen on this subject?

MR. BRYCE: My attention has not been called to this matter; but I may refer my hon. Friend to Sub-section (6) of Section 14 of the Local Government Act, 1894, under which the accounts of all parochial charities, not being ecclesiastical charities, are to be delivered within 14 days from the day appointed for making them out, to the chairman of the parish meeting, who is to present them at the next parish meeting. I understand that a circular on this subject has been issued by the Charity Commissioners.

## ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department—(1) whether he is prepared to insert any provisions in the Established Church (Wales) Bill relating to the celebration of marriages in the Church in Wales and registers recording such marriages; and (2) whether he proposes to insert any provisions relating to registers of baptisms and burials, and other books and documents containing entries wholly or partly relating to the affairs of the Church or to ecclesiastical charities mentioned in the 17th Section of the Local Government Act, 1894?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H.H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): In the case of Ireland the question of the celebration of marriages was dealt with by a measure passed subsequently to the Irish Church Act, namely, the Matrimonial Causes and Marriage Law (Ireland) Amendment Act of 1870. I will consider whether it is possible and expedient to make any provision for the matter in the Established Church (Wales) Bill. As regards the second part of the hon. Baronet's question, I may point out that Clause 27, paragraph 5, of the Bill contains an express saving for the books and documents referred to in Section 17 of the Local Government Act, 1894.

## PORTRANE LUNATIC ASYLUM, COUNTY DUBLIN.

*MR. J. J. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether it is intended to construct the proposed Lunatic Asylum at Portrane, county Dublin, of imported concrete, although a few miles distant, namely, at Milverton, near Skerries, there is a practically unlimited supply of excellent stone—and excellent concrete, if required, can be manufactured at Portrane itself; and whether, if the intention referred to is entertained by the Board of Control, he will take instant steps to cause it to be abandoned, and to have it intimated to the Board that all the materials which are required for the building in question, and are available in the county of Dublin at as small a cost as elsewhere, ought to be obtained there?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND: The Board of Control inform me that the details connected with this new Asylum are still under consideration with the architect, and that it would be impossible at this stage to give information as to the materials to be used in the construction of the building. It is not, however, intended to use "imported concrete" in the construction.

*MR. CLANCY: Is the hon. Gentleman prepared to make to the Board of Works the intimation I suggest?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND: In the circumstances, perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to communicate with the Chief Secretary, or give notice.

*MR. CLANCY: The question is on the Paper now.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne), who entered the House at this stage: I am not quite satisfied that I can give the full particulars. The answer which my hon. and learned Friend has given to the question on the Paper is perfectly correct.

*MR. CLANCY: Will the right hon. Gentleman be prepared to intimate to the Board of Works that the course I suggest ought to be pursued?

MR. J. MORLEY: No, Sir; I cannot answer that off-hand. I am not at all sure that the matter is within my control. I think the Board of Works have control of these matters.

### THE THEATRE ROYAL, RUGBY.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he has received representations from the Actors' Association (an incorporated Society for the theatrical profession) protesting against the decision of the Justices at Rugby in Petty Sessions granting the renewal of a licence for the performance of stage plays at a shed or booth constructed entirely of wood, called the "Theatre Royal, Rugby," on the ground that this shed or booth is manifestly unfit to be licensed as a theatre; and whether, as there appears to be no appeal from this decision of the Justices, he will request them to reconsider the matter?

MR. ASQUITH: I have received the representation referred to, also a report from the Justices; but I have no power to require them to reconsider their decision. The Justices have their power to license theatres by delegation from the County Council under Section 28 of the Local Government Act, 1888. So far as any danger from fire is concerned, the District Council can put in force the provisions of Section 36 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, but I have no jurisdiction in the matter.

### DEFRAUDING A RAILWAY COMPANY.

MR. ELLIOTT LEES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to two cases tried at the Liverpool City Police Court on 6th March, in the first of which an underwriter, whose first-class contract ticket expired in March last, was proved to have travelled constantly upon the line from New Brighton to Liverpool without paying his fare, and yet the case was dismissed by the Magistrate, although he is reported to have said, he himself could not conceive how a man travelling day by day could possibly believe that he had taken out a contract when he had not, but still he could not see that there was any evidence of intent to defraud on which he might convict; the case would, therefore, be dismissed; and in the second a cotton salesman was fined 20s. and costs for presenting a ticket of the value of 1d. which was one day out of date and had not been previously used; and whether he can take any action in the matter?

MR. ASQUITH: The first case was dismissed by the Magistrate because, in his opinion, there was not sufficient evidence of intent to defraud to justify a conviction. I have, therefore, no power to take any action in that case; in the second case the defendant tendered two tickets in succession, each of which upon examination proved to have been previously used, a fact which the defendant endeavoured to conceal by holding the clipped end of the ticket tightly in his hand. The intent to defraud was, therefore, clear, and I see no ground for any interference with the Magistrate's decision.

### BOILER EXPLOSION AT GOVAN.

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead) desired to ask the President of the Board of Trade a question, of which he had given him private notice, namely, whether he could give the House any information with regard to an explosion of a water-tube boiler the previous day at the Fairfield Works, Govan, whereby one man was killed and six scalded.

MR. BRYCE replied that the question only came into his hands after he had reached the House, and he had not yet received any information about the occurrence. He would, however, at once make inquiries.

MR. A. B. FORWOOD (Liverpool, Ormskirk) observed that, arising out of this question, he had given notice to ask the Civil Lord whether the boiler which exploded was not a water-tube boiler of the Wilcox type placed on torpedo destroyers, and built by the Fairfield Company for the Admiralty?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I have not received the notice.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could now give the date of the Budget statement?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): It will be in the week after that on which the House meets again after the

Easter recess, but whether it will be on the Monday or Thursday I cannot now say.

MR. FORWOOD asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take Vote 8, the Shipbuilding Vote, as soon as was conveniently possible after the Easter holidays, so that the question of the boilers which were now being supplied to the Admiralty might be discussed. He understood the right hon. Gentleman had agreed to afford facilities for such discussion ?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied that he would consult with the Admiralty on the subject.

## LETTING OF SPORTING RIGHTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Luttrell, Bill to prevent owners from letting Sporting Rights over the heads of the occupiers of the land.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 190.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

## LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) rose to move the Second Reading of this Bill. He said :—Mr. Speaker, I made so exorbitant a demand on the patience of the House in moving for leave to introduce this Bill, that I regret to have to be obliged again to make a further draft on their indulgence—this time, I hope, a much more moderate demand. The truth is, this subject is so technical, so complex, and so many opposite principles of law are interwoven in such a mass of unfamiliar fact, the subject is so full of terms of art in what is essentially a foreign language, or what is more confusing still, terms in our own tongue with a foreign sense,—that I hope the House will excuse me if I again attempt to make some of the principles of the Bill more plain than I was able to do before the Bill was in the hands of hon. Members. I am disappointed in having to say that none of the difficulties have been cleared up in any way by any serious criticisms since the Bill was printed. I have been a pretty industrious reader of all the speeches and articles on the subject. The articles I have read have been rather querulous and railing than critical. The hon. and learned Gentleman who sits opposite me made a speech full of that rather mechanical and automatic violence which is sometimes called forensic, and which Irish lawyers have at command, but which neither helps any question forward nor keeps any question back. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the proposals of the Government were the most disastrous and most revolutionary measure of land reform that had ever been produced. [Mr. CARSON: "Hear, hear."] The hon. and learned Gentleman still thinks so; but my mind was considerably relieved when I read, in another part of the hon. and learned Member's speech, that he had not determined whether or not to vote against the Second Reading. [*Mr. Carson made some observation which did not reach the Gallery.*] I presume if the hon. and learned Member did really believe this was the most revolutionary and disastrous measure of land reform ever introduced into this House, he would, I am sure, have influence enough with the Gentlemen who sit near him to persuade them to share his view. Then there was my hon. Friend the Member for the Guildford Division, who has taken an active part in the Committee that discussed this subject. The hon. Member wrote a letter to *The Times*, in no very agreeable tone, in which he said that I had missed a great chance. But on reading that letter very carefully, all I could find was that I had missed a great chance of introducing a sham, an empty and a retrograde Bill, which would satisfy neither Irish landlords nor Irish tenants, and which would not have settled one single difficulty which the experience of the working of the Act of 1881 has brought to light. Then, Sir, finally the Landowner's Convention has met and passed resolutions, and the effect of their resolutions was that they were willing to remedy any defects which admittedly existed in the Irish Land Acts, but they take care, so far as I have been able to read their proceedings, not to admit any particular difficulties as to which they are ready with a remedy. In the three or four weeks that have elapsed since the First Reading of the Bill, I have not come across from gentlemen in Ireland—and English Members have been, perhaps discreetly, silent—one single effective or practical criticism. The Irish landlords may be a falling class, but even broken causes have a statesmanship of their own; and the Irish landlords are certainly not without men of strong understanding, of enormous and complete familiarity with the subject, of a high order of intelligence and large experience, some of them, of great public affairs. They are gentlemen from whom Parliament has a right to expect some responsible aid in reaching a settlement of these difficulties. It is a peculiar misfortune of the Irish Land question that the House of Lords contains some of the ablest—I think I may say, without offence to Gentlemen in this House, the ablest—representatives of the landlords, and not one single direct representative of the tenants. In this House, on the other hand, we are fortunate enough to possess some of the ablest and most ingenious representatives of the tenants, but the landlords are represented mainly by a row of Irish Queen's Counsel and one or two lay spokesmen, who, I regret to think, represent that irreconcilable junta—I think my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin calls them—which is always violent, which is unteachable, which is always wrong, which always fights these Bills and these proposals with a blind and, I must say, rather stupid, desperation. Well, there are signs in the present Session that English and Scotch Conservatives, including the Leader of the Opposition, are rather shaking off the thraldom of their Irish friends. There was a Bill in reference to the Irish Poor Law Guardians, and another Bill as to Irish Municipal Franchise, in connection with which both the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his supporters seemed to show their willingness to look at Irish questions more or less from the Irish point of view. There are some questions upon which it would be mere mockery for a Minister standing at this box to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to approach them with a mind free from all prepossessions. I believe the great subject which we were debating last night to be one of the sort in regard to which it would be unreasonable to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their deliberate action, to place themselves in the same position which we hold. The Irish Land Question is not, or ought not to be, a question of that sort. I can quite understand that the Irish Land Act of 1870 and the Act of 1881 contained so many daring and innovating principles that it was natural for gentlemen of the Conservative Party to meet them with antagonism, but there is no reason whatever in this Bill, if its proposals are first of all correctly understood, and secondly if they are rightly weighed in connection with the exigencies which give rise to them in Ireland, why gentlemen belonging to the Conservative Party should not be able to take as fair a view of them as we do ourselves. In treating this Bill, I must ask the House to consider that the Legislation of 1881 has been more or less restricted and baffled, not through any fault of the Legislature, but by the action of the Courts in what they consider to be perfectly sound judicial decisions. The object of this Bill is, broadly speaking, apart from some three or four provisions which do not affect the Legislation of 1881, such as the 14th and 15th Clauses, to restore the great objects which the right hon. Member for Midlothian and Parliament had in view. I am not going again to ask the House to accompany me through all the clauses at this stage. But I should like, if the House will allow me, to explain and to defend two or three of the proposals which have aroused, as I understand—though I have not seen any evidence of it, except in the speech of the hon. and learned Member—a strong degree of antagonism among the Irish landlord party. I need not say anything about the limitation of the statutory term. That is an important proposal, and something will no doubt, be said upon it in Committee; but I have only to point out in the meantime that the alteration of the statutory term from 15 years to 10 was a proposal recommended by the Cowper Commission, and it needs no particular defence from me, because by the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman opposite passed through the House in 1887, the inviolability of the statutory term was, of course, repudiated.

MR. E. CARSON (Dublin University): Not the least.

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. and learned Member says not the least. Of course it was not formally repudiated, but the Act of 1887 carried out certain enactments, with regard to the revision of rents, and I am sure it will be agreed that no statesman holding the view that the statutory term was inviolable could admit any proposals of that kind. The provision most open to criticism, no doubt, is that for making the abridgment of the statutory term retrospective. I am all the more ready to admit this proposal open to criticism and to dispute, because in the Committee I myself gave a casting vote against it. Fuller reflection and a wider acquaintance with the facts of the case and a fuller consideration of the arguments for and against, convinced me that the extension of this abridgment to terms already fixed was required both by policy and by the principles upon which we are acting in other parts of the Bill. It is not denied that rents fixed in 1882, 1883, 1884, and possibly 1885 were too high. That is easy to understand. The procedure was novel, the Court itself was an entire innovation, the gentlemen who had to work the new system were inexperienced, and the action of the Lords' Committee which sat in 1882-83 was not calculated to aid the sub-Commissioners in fixing fair rents, but rather—and I believe it is admitted it did have that effect—stimulated the fixing of too high rents. Cases are brought before me every day. I have in my mind a case where the old rent was £72, and the judicial rent was fixed at £63, and the other day landlord and tenant agreed upon a new valuation, according to which the rent was further lowered to £45. How can this House, in face of a multitude of facts of that kind, say that a fifteen years' term is not too long, and if it is too long for all future rents, on what principle can you deny that it is too long for rents already fixed? There are certain classes of holdings which are excluded from the benefit of the fair-rent Court—demesne lands, town parks, pasture holdings, and so forth. I will point out under this head that we have not abolished one single class or category of exclusion. They all remain excluded. What we do is to endeavour to extricate them from the position in which judicial decisions have placed them. Whether the limitations we have laid down are correct and sound, are all matters fairly open to discussion, and it is perfectly proper they should be fully examined in Committee. But assuredly there is no ground whatever in any proposal that we make under this head of the Bill, which would justify anybody in regarding the Bill as violent, innovating, or revolutionary. I now approach that portion of the Bill round which the most stubborn contest is likely to be waged—I mean the question of improvements. Before dealing with that, I may be permitted one remark on the subject of the landlord's right of pre-emption—a subject on which the hon. Member for Guildford in the Committee showed he takes an interest. As the House understands, the Act of 1881 gives to the tenant the right of selling his interest in the holding, provided that he gives full and proper notice to the landlord that he is going to do so, and the landlord has the right, after notice, to buy up the tenancy at the true valuation. The hon. Member for Guildford contends that by abolishing the landlord's right of pre-emption, as we propose to do, we are removing an effective check against the monstrous prices, as he would regard them, which are paid for the tenants' interest. Nobody who knows the facts will deny that the prices paid for the tenants' interest are amazing. An enormous number of years' purchase is given in many cases. It is absurd to say that the landlord's right of pre-emption is in practice and effect any check at all. It is extremely rarely that the landlord exercises his right. If pre-emption is to be an effective check, the landlord must step forward in every case, or nearly every case. As a matter of fact—I am speaking in the presence of gentlemen in both camps who know the facts of Ireland—the landlord does not step in to exercise his right in one case in a thousand. This jealousy on the part of my hon. Friend for the right of pre-emption only means a jealousy of losing the power of buying the tenant's interest at one price and selling it at another and a higher price. I am not going to argue the question further than to point out to hon. Gentlemen opposite that this right of pre-emption does not exist where the Ulster custom exists. There the landlord has no right of pre-emption, and everybody knows that the real and undisputed exercise of the right of free sale is one of the reasons why the agrarian question in Ulster has generally been so much less acute than it has been in other parts of Ireland. But you need not go to Ulster after all. Our knowledge of human nature is quite enough to tell us that the more you make the tenant sure that the more he improves his holding, the greater will be the price which he will receive in the open market, the more is your assurance that that tenant will do the best he can to cultivate his holding. Perhaps it may lighten a somewhat tedious exposition and bring the matter more vividly before the House, if I read to them a very short description which I came across the other day in the autobiography of a gentleman once a Member of this House, and well known to many Members of the House now, I mean the late Sir William Gregory. In his autobiography I find this passage. He is speaking of the sale of some portions of his ancestral estates in the county of Galway:—

> "I may here mention that the result of this sale had a very strong influence afterwards in my political career, and rendered me a very advanced politician on the tenants' side, on the landlord and tenant question. Shortly after my father's death, I visited every holding on the estate, and was struck with the results of the unflagging industry of the tenants who occupied the light stony land about Kinvara. They had by their labour, and with no allowance from the landlord, cleared large portions of their farms, and the great monuments, as they called them, of stones attested their industry. From these clear patches they had excellent barley crops, and were in prosperity. My great-uncle and father were both just men, and allowed them to enjoy the fruits of their toil for many years without raising the rent. On the occasion of my visit, when I was about to drive away, I said to these tenants, who had assembled to greet me, that I was surprised to see so much good land, and that I thought it was capable of bearing a higher rent. Of course, this called forth a general protestation, and very sad were their faces; but they soon cleared up when I said to them, 'Were I to take one shilling out of your pockets on account of the additional value you had given to my property by your industry, I should be a robber and ashamed to look you in the face. You can go on in good heart with your work, and be assured that while I own this property, your rent shall never be raised on account of your improvements.' Such were my intentions, and such was the confidence of those tenants that they never asked for a lease, or I should have gladly given it to them. When the sale came on I was so occupied with other matters that I quite forgot their danger. Indeed, it never crossed my mind, for I had then heard of no particular instances of rapacity on the part of new purchasers; but I very soon had a terrible account of my remissness in not securing these poor folk. Mr. ———, to whom I have referred, as soon as he was placed in possession of the lots he had purchased, on which those tenants dwelt, lost no time in dealing with them in the most remorseless fashion. The rents were raised so as to pay £5 per cent. on the borrowed capital, and a large income besides for himself. They were almost invariably doubled, and in some cases £5 was charged where £2 had been the rate of the former rent. But he killed the goose for the golden egg, the town of Kinvara was all but ruined, and the best tenants ran away. I met one in Australia, at Ballarat, and he assured me he was well off when I was his landlord, but a pauper three years after, when he emigrated."

It is things of that kind that have sent thousands and tens of thousands of Irish across the sea, not only to Australia, but still more to the United States, with hatred in their hearts for the system which exposed them to these abominable cruelties, and for the Government and this Parliament which allowed such wrongs. I am all the more glad to have read that passage, because Sir William Gregory and his ancestors had none of this harsh spirit, and it shows that there were some exceptions, at all events, to Mr. Justice Keogh's violent description of the Irish lairds as "the most heartless, thriftless, and indefensible landocracy in the world." The history of Ireland is a history of confiscation, of plantations and transplantations, of settlements and re-settlements. The great fee of Ireland has been transferred half-a-dozen times—in the time of King Henry, of Elizabeth, of James I., and of Cromwell—sometimes by soldiers and violence, sometimes by lawyers and chicane. The unwritten history of Ireland is the important thing, and the thing that is worth remembering. While all these changes were going on—all these great superficial processes of plantation and transplantation—the cultivation of the soil was all that time being carried on under difficulties untold and discouragements indescribable by men who were kept in a condition not much better than that of serfs and bond slaves. It was they who, under the system of Irish landholding, made all the improvements that were made, and who now claim that the fruits of their labours shall not be taken from them. I am not going to read passages, although they abound in the reports of the Devon, Bessborough, and Richmond Commissions, to show that the tenant has really made the improvements. What I want the House to do is, not to look at the past, but to consider the future. That is what gives its importance to this Bill. Who is the Irish landlord now? Has such a change taken place in his means and in his position that he is better able, or likely to be better inclined, to make improvements? Is he more firmly rooted and planted in the soil than he was, and are his individual interests bound up in making two blades of grass grow where one grew before? Why, it is obvious that he is little more than a rent-charger now with tenants who may leave him when they like, but whom he cannot displace or control so long as they observe certain conditions, however much he might like to. With him—I am not blaming him at all for it—the vital and crucial question is, whether he will get 15, or 17, or 19 years' purchase to clear out. That is the policy—I do not dissent from it—of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition and the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. They have agreed that the true policy of settling this question is the policy of purchase. That means the specific, compensated, ordinary expropriation of the Irish landlord. The Irish landlord knows it perfectly well, and I am not blaming him when I say you cannot expect him to be an improving landlord. As the hon. Member for South Hunts said last year, "They would be great fools if they were." Human nature and common sense being what they are, it is irrational to expect men in this position to apply themselves to the improvement of their own country in the same spirit in which, for example, the Scotch proprietors 150 years ago applied themselves to the improvement of their country, and transformed the land—I am speaking especially of the Lowlands—from heath and stone and morass into one of the most productive agricultural districts the world has to show. You cannot expect that from the Irish landlord. I should like to make one more general remark. You cannot settle a fair rent by a mathematical formula. People talk as if there were in existence in the empyrean or in vacuo an abstract, perfect, ideal figure of a fair rent which omniscience could discover. There is no such ideal figure. I understand what the value of a holding in England is. It is what it will fetch in the market. But by the legislation of 1881 that was exactly what you enacted should not be the value of a holding in Ireland. The whole policy —it may have been right or it may have been wrong—the whole policy of the Act of 1881 was to withdraw the question of value from the open market. The whole structure of that Act rests upon the difference between competitive rent and fair rent. But there is no abstract perfect figure for a thing of that kind. Valuation is a matter of opinion, and you often, in the Land Court, find two valuers, one of whom will fix the value of a holding at so much, and another, who will say he is equally skilled, who will fix it at something quite different. The discrepancies in valuation are sometimes nothing short of appalling. Gentlemen must not expect in the Bill any precise statement of practical directions, but they will find perfectly clear indications of the principle on which we expect this Bill to be carried into effect. What do we say when we come to the substance of Clause 5? We say to the valuers, "In fixing a fair rent you are not to make the tenant pay on his own improvements. You are to make him allowance for the right of occupancy." I will take the case of a tenant who has a holding for which he pays at the rate of 3s. an acre. He expends £5 on the holding, and the letting value after the improvement, has risen from 3s. an acre to 10s. an acre. How are you going to dispose of the 7s. increment? What do we say? We say that, in the absence of any special circumstance, the whole of that increase due to the improvements should go to the tenant who made the improvements. We are going to give the whole of the increased letting value under ordinary circumstances to the tenant who, as I have said, made the improvements. Are we going to allow nothing for the capacity by which the tenant was enabled to make that increased letting value? That seems to me to be a fundamental principle in the matter. What else was there to let? I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman who I understand is to follow me will kindly pursue my position to the end. Now, suppose the Land Court revising and fixing a fair rent for 10 or 15 years. Are they to assume that their predecessors did not know their business, and that they were not alive to what they were doing, and that they did not take into consideration and account the improvability of the land—that they did not include the use of the improvability and the expectation of making money as one of the elements when they made up the rent, whether the initial rent of the landlord or the judicial rent? I know I shall be referred, as I was referred last year, to the speech of the Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell), and we shall be told of the case of two pieces of land- two holdings in different circumstances in respect to natural advantages—such as exposure to the sun, absence of boulders, kindliness of the soil, and the like. In one case the expenditure of £100 will produce £5 in the letting value, and in the other case the expenditure of £100 will produce a return of only £2. It is perfectly clear that the holding which, by reason of its natural advantages, returns £5 will have a higher rent than the other holding which makes an inferior return. Why are we to suppose that the landlord or the Land Court 10 or 15 years ago made no allowance as between the holdings A and B—between the holding which produces £5 and the other holding which produces £2? Why are we to suppose that? Under the Bill the Valuers would consider these differences of circumstances, and would estimate the letting value of those two holdings accordingly. They would estimate them at their letting value without the improvements, according to the circumstances of each, and they would discriminate between them in fixing a fair rent. I wonder what Gentlemen opposite will find extravagant in this proposal? The valuers will estimate the rent of the holding at the time, fixing a fair rent without the improvements, and that would be the letting value. It is not the letting value of the land after the subsiding of Noah's flood, or the letting value in the time of King John or King James, but the letting value in the time of Victoria. The question is—What is the letting value without those improvements? All the improvements we count in the tenant's interest. I shall no doubt be told, Suppose a harbour is constructed, or suppose a railway is made, or suppose that for any other reason there is an advantage conferred upon the holding which the tenant has had no share in producing, what is to be the effect of that? Is it to have no effect? Well, we neither argue nor intend anything of the kind. We intend that such changes due to alterations in local circumstances apart from the holding shall be treated exactly as they are treated now. These matters will remain just the same after the Bill as before. I now come to special circumstances. You take a holding of 100 acres, and 20 acres of it are swamp at 1s. an acre. The tenant will have to drain this swamp, and the effect of that is to transform the swamp into land value for 20s. an acre. The landlord then says, "It is perfectly obvious to any just man that when I fixed the rent of those 20 acres, I did not take into account the possible improvability of the swamp." The landlord will recite the circumstances when he is making objection to the tenant's claim, and we think that in that case the special circumstances should be taken into account. There have been so many misapprehensions upon the provision which I am going to say a word about that I am sure the House will excuse me if I detain them for a moment or two. This was the question of the occupancy right. We say that in fixing a fair rent the Court shall consider the interest of a tenant as including the right of the tenant to the continued occupation of his holding. I am not going to ask the House to listen to a disquisition as to tenant-right. I was reading an Irish law book the other day and I found there were no fewer than nine different significations to be attached to the word "tenant-right." Fortunately, it is not necessary for me to ask the House to consider their comparative validity. In putting this provision into the Bill, we found ourselves upon authority and also on practice, and hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite will agree that the authority of the judges is not to be lightly set aside. Before the Committee, the gentlemen who were in a minority complained that they were not allowed to produce evidence, but they did produce a certain Mr. Toler Garvey, who gave evidence upon this subject. Now I beg the House to listen to what he said upon the process of valuing. He said, in reply to the hon. Member for North Kerry—

> "I always take into account in valuing that there is a tenant there in occupation. I never put on as high a rate for a tenant in occupation as I would if the farm was in the landlord's hands. I always thought the tenant in occupation should never be charged the full rent."

And then he gave an illustration. Mr. Garvey then said :—

> "When I am valuing a farm, if I consider that the full value of that farm is worth 25s. an acre, I would say, 'Well, that would be the value of it if in the hands of the landlord ; that special field, irrespective of the buildings, or anything else ; that field there is worth 25s. an acre, but the tenant being in occupation of that farm, 22s. or 21s. would be enough to charge.'"

And then he went on to say that he made his allowance proportionate to the length of time the tenant had been in occupation. But it is not merely a casual valuer who lays down this doctrine. Will the House listen to what the judges say? Mr. Justice Bewley, a Judge of the High Court and Chief Land Commissioner, wrote to Lord Justice FitzGibbon and used this language :—

> "I understand the effect of your judgment in 'Adams and Dunseath,' and of your evidence before the Committee to be this—if, after making an allowance to the tenant on the rent for his improvement works, there remains any improved value of the land reclaimed or drained, the whole of it does not necessarily go to the landlord, because the tenant may have a tenant-right or interest in the holding quite irrespective of his improvements, to which effect must be given in assessing the rent. I was going to point out that it seems to me that, from the commencement, that is what the Land Commission has, in fact, done. They have, in fact, apportioned what would otherwise be the full letting value between landlord and tenant, because they have taken into consideration this, whatever you may choose to call it, tenant-right or goodwill arising from occupation."

I have only one passage to quote from Lord Justice FitzGibbon, a judge of the very highest authority, as everyone will agree. He said :—

> "The decision that the interest of the tenant was to be ascertained, defined, checked or limited, by the consideration of what he would get under the Compensation Clause, on leaving the holding, was that of six of the seven judges. But how the relative interests were to be worked out in figures in fixing the rent was not within the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeal. Whether it was to be done by first allowing a percentage upon outlay to the tenant, and then fixing a rent on the remainder, with due regard to both interests, or whether the whole value was to be dealt with on some more general principle, making a fair proportionate allowance for so much of the value as was justly attributable to the tenants' outlay, was a matter for the Land Commission."

Therefore we founded ourselves on authority, and the authority is there. Lord Waterford, a man of strong understanding and ample experience, has written a letter which shows he has put an entirely different view upon this clause. He seems to assume that we mean that the interest on the tenant right, the sum paid for the tenant right, is to be deducted from the fair rent from time to time, and he really assumes that we are the authors of so preposterous a proposition as this :—My rent is £100. I have a mind to go. I sell my interest for £1,000. The man to whom I have sold my tenant's interest goes into Court and has a fair rent fixed, and it seems to be supposed that by this clause we direct the Court to deduct, say, 3 per cent. from the £1,000 for the tenant's right, and deduct that from the rent. Mark what may follow. My friend has purchased my tenant's interest for £1,000, and then, by the operation of this clause as interpreted by those who do not rightly judge it, £30 is taken from the rent. That leaves the rent £70. What he does is to go to some other friend and say :—"I have got this holding down to £70, what will you give me for my interest?" The man says :—"I will give you £1,500." The theory of hon. Gentlemen is, that he will again have a deduction made of 3 per cent. That would be £45, and so reduce the rent to £20. ["Hear, hear," *and laughter.*] Well, we may be abandoned politicians, but we should not have been so idiotic as to make proposals of that kind. Anyone, I think, who reads the clause with an open mind, will see that all we mean is that the sitting tenant shall have an allowance made. If he is a sitting tenant, he shall have a deduction made, because he is a sitting tenant, exactly of the kind which Mr. Garvey and others of the Sub commissioners admit to be their regular practice. That is all we intend this clause to carry, but if it is found that these words have that preposterous meaning which is imputed to them, they shall be put right. As I have explained, we go no further than the doctrine laid down by Mr. Justice Bewley. I will just say one word upon the the Presumption Clause. There we say, or intend to say, that the presumption is always to be in favour of the tenant. The Act of 1870 laid down that the presumption was always to be in favour of the tenant, but there were so many restrictions and qualifications introduced that that has not been an operative presumption. We say that the presumption is always to be in favour of the tenant, but we draw a line at the year 1850, and we say that in the case of improvements prior to 1850, though the presumption remains where it resided before, the landlord is to have the privilege of rebutting that presumption with evidence of a somewhat lower quality. We put him on a less high degree of proof than would be legally admissible evidence in a law Court. If you find that this is unfair to the landlord, do not forget that it is an Ulster custom, and I have never heard that there has been any great injustice or hardship done to the Ulster landlords, or that they have complained of any such injustice or hardship.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The rents are high.

*Mr. J. MORLEY: If there is an injustice or hardship, perhaps some Gentleman from Ulster will get up and say so. Then there is Clause 16, the Evicted Tenants Clause. I only want to make one single observation upon that. Questions have been put to me from the other side of the House by gentlemen below the gangway from Ireland asking whether, and if not why not, the Government would consent to "implement"—to use a horrible and barbarous word—this clause by a financial grant such as was proposed in the Bill of last year. My answer remains good now—that, as at present advised, the Government do not propose to introduce provisions of that kind. But if hon. Gentlemen think that it is possible that the representatives of the landlords and the representatives of the tenants may come to some agreement that this clause would not have a fair chance without this "implementing," the Government would be prepared to consider a fair proposal of that kind. As to procedure, we admit the necessity of trying to meet the influx of new cases; and when I introduced this Bill, I pointed out that we have got ready what is called an automatic scheme. But I do not myself feel—though competent authorities think otherwise—that it would he regarded as a fairly workable plan. It was printed in the newspapers, though I did not see any comments on it, good, bad, or indifferent; while all the remarks which I have privately heard are of the most discouraging character. This necessity for an automatic scheme has been felt in India, too—not, indeed, in reference to the land, but in reference to land revenue. The Indian Government have from time to time carefully considered the point, and minutes and memoranda on the subject abound, but they have failed to produce any automatic and self-working scheme. The proposals of the right hon. Gentleman opposite in 1887 were very limited in character, and their success had not been such as to make them an example to be followed in any large and general proposals. But something might be done by dispensing with a hearing where the parties acquiesce in the *prima facie* fixing of a fair rent. The Land Commission might send a valuer to fix the fair rent, and then, on his report, make a conditional order; and if the parties acquiesced, that order would become absolute. Legislation is not needed to enable the Land Commission to regulate its proceeding in this way. They can do it by rules. But there is a more important alteration of procedure which would need legislation, and which we propose to introduce into the Bill on the Committee stage—I mean in reference to appeals and rehearings. For the moment we will call them all appeals. I do not believe that anybody can regard the present system of appeals in Ireland with anything but the utmost dismay, and, as a legislator, with something like a sense of shame. What happens is this. Where the parties are discontented with the finding of the Sub-Commission, notice is given to the Chief Commission, who send down one or two Court valuers to report. The Chief Commission then decide between their own valuers and the Sub-Commission's valuers. I will take a case to illustrate this operation. I have here a list of 50 fair-rent cases heard at Cork some time last summer when I happened to be in Ireland. The judicial rents of the whole fifty amount to £1,900. In ten cases the Court valuers' estimate was the same as the judicial rent fixed by the Sub-Commission. In 16 cases the difference between the two was a plus difference of £20; and in 21 cases the difference was a minus difference of £68. In only 11 cases out of the whole number was the difference between the judicial rent fixed provisionally by the Sub-Commissioners and the estimate of the Court valuers more than 1s. an acre, and in 21 cases it was not more than 6d. an acre. What is the cost of all this? There was a five-days' sitting at Cork, when the cost of the Court alone was about £270. The clerks, valuers, and other official expenses would be about £200 more; and the suitors' expenses could not be less than £250—so that the total cost of settling whether the rents should be varied altogether by £88 at the most would be £700. You first of all have three men who see the holding, hear the evidence, and know all about the case. You then send down one or two more Court valuers, who also see the holding; and then you have three gentlemen—two of them lawyers, knowing nothing about expert valuation—who decide between the two sets of men who have seen the holding and know all the circumstances of the case. I cannot conceive a more unsatisfactory or unpromising procedure. What we shall propose is this. That one or two valuers should, in the first instance, be sent down to the holding and report a fair rent to the Land Commission. The Chief Commission will then give notice of those figures to the parties, and, if no objection is raised, that rent will be fixed as the judicial rent. If objection is raised within the prescribed time—and this is the new proposal—the case is to be sent by the Land Commission for re-hearing before a Sub-Commission of the ordinary kind, composed of one lawyer and two laymen; but the two laymen must be of the rank of permanent Assistant Commissioners. If their decision, arrived at after seeing the holding, is unanimous, then that shall be final, subject, of course, to allegation on affidavit that some omission has been made from the valuation. That ought to remove the objection which the hon. Member for South Tyrone urged. I believe that he was in a minority of one in the Committee on the clause dealing with appeals. The objection was that such pressure of business would be put on the Sub-Commissioners that it would be necessary to increase the staff, and that the Chief Secretary would appoint "a pack of Land Leaguers." "How," it was asked, "could the landlords be expected to accept the finding of such men?" But these officials are permanent Civil servants of the Crown, made so by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the Bill of 1891. Out of 80, 30 were approved by the right hon. Gentleman; and their antecedents having been revised and considered by the right hon. Gentleman, it would show an extremely suspicious nature on the part of the hon. Member for South Tyrone to object to them, and to say that all this farcical and costly procedure of hearing by the Chief Commissioners should be maintained.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: That is not my proposal.

*Mr. J. MORLEY: I quite agree. But the hon. Member's objection was an argument against taking appeals from the Chief Commission.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I voted upstairs in a minority of one, as the right hon. Gentleman says, on this question. The Motion that was proposed was practically a Motion to abolish the right of appeal for at least 350,000 tenant farmers in Ireland. I argued that I could not consent to abolish the right of appeal when I knew that there would probably be appointed 100 temporary Commissioners, brought from all parts of Ireland.

*Mr. J. MORLEY: I have always admitted that the hon. Member's argument had considerable weight in it. But I would point out that the hon. Member's objection does not lie against this proposal. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite may, indeed, object to it. These Gentlemen who would have the final voice under our proposal are the very men who now act as Court valuers.

It is under the valuation of these very gentlemen that the Chief Commissioners are guided and led in the rehearing of cases. If the Chief Commissioners now vary rents, it is according to the Reports of these very men. If the Land Commission can be trusted, as it is now, for the performance of its duties, you must trust it not to delegate this rent-fixing authority to any but perfectly competent persons. I have to thank the House for its indulgence in listening to me in making this necessarily somewhat tedious statement, and I hope that this Bill will receive that fair consideration which I, for a second time, ask for it.

Mr. E. CARSON said, that in the opening words of his speech the right hon. Gentleman indulged in a spasmodic outburst of good temper in which he was pleased to refer to the speeches of Members of the Opposition as being of automatic violence. The right hon. Gentleman also referred to a phrase of the hon. Member for Bodmin's describing certain Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches as being an irreconcilable junta of Irish landlords. The reference was somewhat unfortunate, because hon. Members were so described when they were assisting the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the Evicted Tenants Bill. Those proposals were now abandoned by the right hon. Gentleman in this very Bill.

*Mr. J. MORLEY: I never called the lawyers irreconcilable.

Mr. CARSON did not know to whom in particular the right hon. Gentleman referred when he used the phrase of the hon. Member for Bodmin. Whether they were called irreconcilable or not they had the gratification that the Evicted Tenants Bill had received the quietus it deserved, and the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to write the motto over the grave, "Let it rest in peace"; he was perfectly satisfied now that his proposal was an erroneous one. ["Oh, oh!] If he was not so satisfied, he had not, at all events, had the courage to again introduce it for the consideration of the House. The right hon. Gentleman also found fault with his (Mr. Carson's) statement that this was a revolutionary proposal. He did make that statement, and he made it now. He took the phrase from the speech the present Lord Chancellor made upon similar proposals which were introduced in the Bill of 1883. If he erred in describing these proposals as revolutionary, he erred in very good company, for which the right hon. Gentleman ought to have somewhat more respect than he seemed to have. But a very short glance at the Bill would at once show it was a revolutionary measure. What did it propose? It proposed to reduce the interest of the landlord to prairie value. There, again, he was not using his own language; he was using the language of the Lord Chancellor in reference to absolutely similar proposals. In the second place, the Bill abolished the right of pre-emption, which right was given to the landlord under the Act of 1881, when Parliament was wresting away from him and giving to the tenant the difference between the full market rent and what was conceived to be a fair rent to the tenant who was in the occupation of the holding. In the third place, it set aside the contracts entered into by the landlord under the Act of 1881; in the fourth place, it in certain cases abolished the only remedy for rent in Ireland—namely, ejectment for non-payment of rent; in the fifth place, it set up new statutory limitations in regard to arrears of rent; and, in the sixth place, it let in the tenancies created between 1881 and the passing of the Act of 1887. Any measure which introduced changes of that kind could only be properly described as a revolutionary measure, and if the right hon. Gentleman took any consolation to himself from the fact that he had seen it stated that the Unionist Party were not going to divide against the Second Reading of the Bill, let him say that while that might be so—he did not know whether it would be so or not—but while it might be so, the six fundamental proposals in the Bill he had enumerated were proposals which they were determined to fight to the last extremity; they would fight them line by line and word by word. The Chief Secretary asserted that the Conservatives of England and Scotland were shaking themselves free from the landlord party in Ireland, but he assured the right hon. Gentleman there was not a shadow of foundation for the supposition that the parties were not, in respect of those fundamental particulars, absolutely united and determined to resist the proposals in Committee. In the last portion of his speech the right hon. Gentleman referred to the necessity for a simplification of procedure. If ever there was a case in which the eagerness of politicians in a hurry and the ill effects of it had been most clearly demonstrated, it was the present. So eager were the majority of the Select Committee to bring in their report and exclude evidence that no proposal whatsoever was contained in the report upon the most vital point. To do him justice, the right hon. Gentleman, in introducing the Bill said that he had hit upon an automatic scheme. It was a pity that automatic scheme was never submitted to the Committee, because that scheme broke down on the very night it was introduced by the weight of its own unworkability. What was the description the right hon. Gentleman now gave of this wonderful automatic scheme which he had not even ventured to put in his Bill? He said it was intelligible, but it was unworkable. The Chief Secretary told them some effort must be made in the Bill to bring about a reduction in the expense of the rehearings. The right hon. Gentleman passed lightly over the shortening of the statutory term; his words were "I will say nothing about the shortening of the term." Had he for one moment considered the disastrous expense he was about to put on the Irish landlords? When the Act of 1881 was passed, the landlord was told that when the rent was fixed, it was fixed for a term of 15 years. When the question of the fixing of the term was before the House the party to which the right hon. Gentleman belonged wanted to extend the period to 35 years; indeed, the present Lord Chief Justice actually moved an Amendment extending the term from 15 years to 30 or 35 years. Had the Chief Secretary ever thought what expense the landlord was put to in having his rents fixed for 15 years? He (Mr. Carson) knew of one case in which a landlord was on one day served with from 180 to 200 notices. That meant from 180 to 200 law suits. The landlord had to employ professional advisers and valuers, and have a regular hearing in reference to every one of the cases. He believed that there was not a single appeal which was fortunate for the landlord, who told him that the costs averaged £10 a case. That was £2,000 for the luxury of having his rents fixed under the Act of 1881. He had, at all events, the assurance of Parliament that he would not have to repeat the dose for 15 years, and that when it became necessary to repeat the dose, it would be repeated by degrees, because the whole 200 tenants could not have their cases settled at the same time. What was being done by this Bill? Every case in which ten years had run was to be thrown again on the hands of the landlord. The right hon. Gentleman said the Act of 1887 broke the statutory term. Would he preserve the statutory term as that Act did? Would he save expense by putting in the same automatic procedure which was put in the Act of 1887? The right hon. Gentleman, it appeared, would not. He was willing to refer to the change made by the Act of 1887 so far as he could use it as an engine against the landlord, but he was unwilling to make any any use of it at present so far as it might save the landlord disastrous expense by throwing into his hands the resettlement of those rents at a cost which would, in many cases, leave the landlord absolutely nothing when they considered the reductions which must necessarily be made in the rents. He should also like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the cost to the State of this provision. Had the right hon. Gentleman considered how many tenants would be thrown into the Court if he let in all those tenants whose terms had now run the full term of ten years? He believed it was almost impossible to estimate the number; it would take the first five or six years after the Act passed to get the applications settled. The right hon. Gentleman said that the cost to the State of the Land Commission had been over £1,000,000. He had seen a calculation made that if the business was to proceed in anything like a satisfactory way, and if those cases were to be worked out by the Land Commission and rents fixed, it would be necessary to appoint 30 or 40 additional Sub-Commissions. He therefore said that the first clause in the Bill was a most disastrous one, and about which the right hon. Gentleman had said nothing. He hoped to have some concession from the right hon. Gentleman, though he did not suppose it was of the slightest use suggesting to the Chief Secretary that some method ought to be adopted of trying in an equitable way to arrive at an average. But in a Bill of this kind, when they were breaking through a statutory right, they ought not to add to the misery and the want of so many landlords by mulcting them in those extravagant amounts of cost which they would necessarily have to pay if the Bill passed in its present form. The right hon. Gentleman dealt next with the proposed abolition of the right of pre-emption. He did not quite follow the right hon. Gentleman's argument to its logical conclusion in that case. What was his conclusion? Why was this right of pre-emption given to the landlord? It was given when they passed the Act of 1881, by which it was said that the landlord was not for the future to be allowed to take what was the full market rent, but merely the fair rent—something apart from the competitive rent. If they were transferring to the tenant this difference between the full rent and the fair rent, it was only fair that if the tenant came forward to sell in the open market he should not again establish on the holding the full rent, which it was said was not beneficial to the relationship between landlord and tenant. It was because they wished to put down that full rent that they said, if the tenant came forward to sell, the landlord was to have the right to have the interest of the tenant assessed in the holding; but the tenant was not to go into the market and again create as against the landlord, whose rent they had taken away, the full rent which they had said ought not to prevail in these cases in Ireland. He could imagine no provision more absolutely essential for the purpose of carrying out the basis of the Act of 1881; but the only answer given by the right hon. Gentleman was—

> "My experience is that this provision is only exercised, perhaps, in one case out of a thousand in Ireland."

If that was so, then what was the necessity for abolishing it? The reason why it was not exercised in those cases was because the landlord, having got notice of who the incoming tenant was, and seeing that he was a substantial tenant who would be able to secure him a fair rent fixed, notwithstanding the large price he had given, might possibly not interfere; but the moment they took away the right of pre-emption and the right of the landlord to interfere to the limited extent under the Act of 1881, they took away all safeguards and they allowed the tenant to go freely into the market and create once more the very mischief which the Government themselves were trying to abolish. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to discuss the thorny question of improvements, and in order to make his task lighter he read an interesting passage from the life of Sir William Gregory. But there was an important matter which the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to tell the House —namely, that the reference by Sir William Gregory related to a time long antecedent even to the Act of 1870. When some biographies came to be written in years to come of Irish landlords or by Irish landlords some touching reference might be made which would lead to the conclusion that the Chief Secretary was right in 1886 when he thought it was high time to devise some scheme by which the tenantry in Ireland might be prevented from confiscating the landlords' property. The right hon. Gentleman said it was impossible to give the exact figure which represented the fair rent. That was what he and his hon. Friends used to say in 1881, when the right hon. Gentleman was proposing the scheme. They told the right hon. Gentleman that the question of fair rent was a question of valuation; it might differ according to the men who made the valuation. Once they put an end to the free contract as between landlord and tenant they were always driven back to those absurdities, that the rent to be a fair rent would be held by one valuer to be £10 and by another £30, according to the predilections of each individual. While valuers differed sometimes, it was alleged occasionally that in making an independent valuation they had arrived at the same conclusion as regarded fair rent. He recalled one case in this connection. Two valuers were called up, one after the other, to value a farm. One of the valuers valued the farm at £59 19s. 11¾d. Another gentleman who was called up said that he had valued the farm exactly at the same figure. On further examination this gentleman said that he had not communicated in any way with the previous valuer, and that he had made his valuation from field to field, and without having seen the result brought out by the previous witness. In cross-examination the witness told the Court that he had great experience in valuation work, and that he had taken charge of many difficult cases. Then the witness was asked this question by counsel:—

> "May I ask whether you happened to see on any part of the farm 'a coincidence'?"

Turning over the leaves of his note-book, he replied:—

> "Yes, I think in one of the fields, near a far corner, there was one, but I do not know that I paid particular attention to it."

The right hon. Gentleman having so far pressed the Act of 1881, all of which he supposed was appropriate to what he was coming to, viz., what had been so often called the unearned increment, told them what the provisions of the Act in that respect meant, and he certainly made use of some of the most extraordinary arguments in reference to his own section that, he ventured to think, he had ever heard. He said that except under special circumstances the whole unearned increment—which was the term that had always been used—was to be considered the property of the tenant.

*Mr. J. MORLEY: I did not use it.

Mr. CARSON said, the right hon. Gentleman argued that the whole of the improved letting value, or unearned increment, was to be considered the property of the tenant. But when they looked at the section the extraordinary part of it was that the words "special circumstances" never occurred at all. The right hon. Gentleman went on to give an elaborate explanation of what the special circumstances would be held to mean, and said that, having regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant respectively, they were of opinion, and had been so advised by the highest authorities, that, read in the light of what he was then stating to the House, any Court would hold that that was the meaning. The right hon. Gentleman ought to know that, unfortunately, it could not be read in the light of what he had stated to the House. The words "having regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant respectively" were already in the Act of 1881 in relation to the fixing of the fair rent, and, so far as he could ascertain, they had never received any judicial interpretation at all. During the Debates of 1881, when this question was before the House, in answer to a pacific question, a noble Lord who represented the Government in the other House said that these were the most innocent words in the world. It was a long way from that definition to make these words mean special circumstances read in the light of what the right hon. Gentleman had stated to the House. Nothing had been treated in a more uncertain manner by the Committee which sat upon the question, and by the right hon. Gentleman himself, than this question of the improved letting value. This was of course one of the fundamental Clauses of the Bill. The law, as had been stated before the Committee, was this, that when a tenant expended money in improving his farm he was in the first place allowed a reduction, varying, he thought, from 5 to 12 per cent. upon the outlay which he had made, and that was deducted from what would otherwise be the rent of the farm. In addition to that, if there was anything over and above, in the nature of increased letting value, what would otherwise be the value of the farm by reason of such improvements, it was at present divided between the landlord and the tenant. The Attorney-General shook his head, but that was Lord Justice FitzGibbon's evidence.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir R. T. Reid, Dumfries): That it ought to be.

Mr. CARSON said the evidence was that it had been so decided, and the Lord Chancellor, when he had been in that House, said not only that that was the decision but that it was right and equitable. He would ask if the present law was not a fair law. He ventured to think a more equitable arrangement could hardly be conceived. That was an arrangement which up to the present hour had been always approved of even by the most advanced advocates of agrarian reform in Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman would look at Mr. Butt's book upon the Land Acts he would find that that was the full length of the demand that he made. He had always understood that to give the landlord his share over and above the fair interest that the tenant got for his improvement was the recommendation of the Committee—*i.e.*, that the law should be so expressed as had been laid down by Lord Justice FitzGibbon. He did not really know whether it was upon that assumption that the right hon. Gentleman voted in favour of the Report, or whether he thought it was something else; he had now, at all events, gone one better, because he proposed to deprive the landlord of the small residuum left to him after they had taken away the interest that the tenant got on his outlay. Of this he was absolutely certain, that the hon. Member for South Tyrone when he voted for this proposal in the Committee was under the impression that this was what the Report was recommending, and he would like to know whether this was a proposal framed on the recommendations of the Committee, or a new proposal in advance of the proposals of the Report of the Committee, which was drawn up without any opposition at all on the part of the minority, and after the minority had left the room. The right hon. Gentleman said surely what the landlord let to the tenant and what the tenant paid rent for were the inherent qualities in the soil so let, including the improvability in the soil. That was the first time he had ever heard that put forward on the part of the tenants, and it only showed what a process of evolution went on; the moment they conceded one matter as belonging to the tenant then another matter was immediately started, until in the end—probably that was what was meant to be brought about—there was practically nothing left of what was conceded to belong to the landlord at all. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in an article which was published, he thought, at the time that the right hon. Gentleman's Bill was introduced, said that if the practice of the Land Commission had been to take the capacity of the soil into account in fixing the rent, he should have concurred with those who took the extreme tenant's view of the question, but the practice of the Commission being to value the land as it stood, and not in view of what might be done with it by the expenditure of capital, he thought when any great improvement took place by reason of any exceptional expenditure of capital the landlord was entitled to some consideration. Where did the right hon. Gentleman get his information that this improvability had been included in the rents? The law had been hitherto that when the improvement had been made, then the adjudication took place. He doubted if the right hon. Gentleman would be able to bring up any sub-commissioner, or other person, to say any such thing, and it would be a gross fraud on the tenant if it were done. He would test the right hon. Gentleman's sincerity by asking him if he would put a clause or a proviso into this very clause that, in fixing fair rent, the Commission were prospectively to take into account the fact that the tenant might improve his land. If the right hon. Gentleman did so, he would meet with considerable opposition, not from that side, but from other quarters of the House. He believed that that proviso went beyond even the Report of the Select Committee, which at the time it reported, was composed entirely of members who represented the tenants, and the tenants only, in Ireland. Coming to the question of occupation right, he wanted to know what the Chief Secretary meant in reference to it. Some definition of "occupation right" should be put in the Bill. He wished to point out how absolutely absurd it was to say that a tenant should have a deduction for his occupation right. Let him take a concrete case. The tenant, in the first place, because he was in possession, had a right to have a fair rent fixed. A fair rent was a rent entirely different from a marketable competitive value. In the first instance, therefore, they had to knock off the difference between the fair rent and the market rent. They would then take away not only the tenant's interest for all the improvements he had made, but they subtracted all the improved letting value which resulted from the improvements. When they had done that, what interest had the tenant over and above that in the holding? They gave him the difference between a full and a fair rent because he was in occupation, and taken off all round from his improvemonts. But in addition to that, under this Bill, something was to be added for his occupation specifically.

How was it to be estimated? Was the man in possession for one day to get the same occupancy rent as the man who had been in possession 60 years, or was his occupancy rent to vary according to the time he had been in possession? On the other hand, was his occupancy value or occupation right to be estimated according to the rent fixed? It seemed to be quite clear that the tenant who held at a small rent had much more occupation right than a tenant who held at a large rent. Therefore, because the landlord had, in one case, let at a small rent, he was to have a larger occupation right than a landlord who had let at a larger rent, and had not created the same occupation right in the tenant. The thing was absolutely absurd. The right of the tenant was a totally distinct matter from his rent, and should not be taken into account when the rent was being fixed. Give him the difference between the full rent and the fair rent (which was the rent fixed by the Court); interest for his improvements; deduct everything for the increased letting value of the land and he defied the wit of man to tell him of anything else the tenant had a right to have estimated in the fixing of what was called fair rent. If Lord Justice FitzGibbon said the tenant would have the interest he got under the Compensation Clauses of the Act of 1870, he must have forgotten that he was dealing not with a man who was leaving but with a man who was staying on in his holding, and why the fact that he was entitled to compensation if put out should be taken into consideration in fixing a fair rent (which he had only to pay as long as he remained in his holding) was absolutely unintelligible. He would remind the Chief Secretary that the Bill of 1881 of the right hon. Member for Midlothian contained a proviso that in fixing fair rent the Court was to take into consideration the fact that he was entitled to that compensation when being turned out of his holding under the Act of 1870, and immediately it was seen that the clause led to the exact absurdities now pointed out, the right hon. Member for Midlothian said he never for a moment intended, nor could it be reasonably so enacted, that the tenant's right should be taken into consideration as an element for the reduction of his rent. The result was that the very Clause of the Act of 1870 which the Chief Secretary said was his reason for introducing this into the present Bill was abandoned by the right hon. Member for Midlothian because it would have brought about results which he never intended. He wished the Chief Secretary had given some idea how occupation right was to be applied. He failed to see how it could come to anything but this—the lower the rent, the more would be taken off that rent. The question of presumption in favour of the tenants was one on which there had been much shifting and wobbling since the matter was before the Select Committee. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in the article he had referred to, said he acceded to the report of the majority because he was under the impression that there was nothing to repeal the limitation of the Act of 1850 as set by the Act of 1870. The Chief Secretary, in introducing the Bill, said the limitation of the Act of 1850 was to be preserved, but that, while the tenant was to have absolute presumption in relation to all improvements made since 1850, he was to be able to prove all antecedent improvements by evidence which would not be considered legal evidence. But when the Bill was produced the Chief Secretary said the limitation would be continued in this way—that there was to be an absolute presumption that the tenant had made every improvement on the holding, but that if the improvement had been made prior to 1850 then the landlord might show that he made it by giving illegal evidence. The difference really was this. In the other case it was the tenant who was to give illegal evidence, but apparently the Chief Secretary thought it an improvement to say that the landlord might give this evidence. Perhaps he imagined there would be some amount of opposition from that side of the House, and that illegal evidence would not be illegal when the Bill was passed. The House was a long way off from that. But until the Bill did pass they were entitled to say:—

> "You are attempting to have these matters proved by a method which has never been approved by the jurisprudence of this country."

He wished to point out the unfairness

of the presumption that everything on the holding had been done by the tenant. What did that mean? It not not only meant that the tenant and his predecessors in title had done every single improvement on the holding, but it presumed that every person who had been on the holding was the predecessor in title of the tenant who was claiming. Could anything be more ridiculous? In many cases in Ireland the previous tenants had gone away owing a vast deal more rent than the whole value of the improvements on the land. In cases of that kind—and there were thousands of them Ireland—was it fair to presume that the tenant who made the improvements and went away owing six or seven years' rent was the predecessor in title of the tenant subsequently let in? The moment they made this double presumption—that the works were carried out by the tenant and the predecessor in title of the tenant claiming—as Lord Herschell pointed out, they at once arrived at prairie value. A sub-Commissioner might go to the land and say:—

> "I presume everything here has been done by the tenant or the predecessor in title of the tenant. I see other land lying near which is furze land or unprofitable land. Why should I not presume that this was of the same quality at some time or other, and I value not this land, but the furze and waste land which adjoins it?"

This was absolutely prairie value, and nothing else, and it was brought about by a vast and searching change—to which the Chief Secretary had not alluded—in the definition of "improvements." He had changed the definition which had been understood since 1870, and improvements were now defined as

> "every expenditure of capital or labour in respect of the holding which increases the letting value thereof."

The effect of the Bill was that a sub-commissioner was to take even the very cultivation of a farm used in the ordinary way, and without any exceptional expenditure, and this was to be taken into consideration on the principle laid down. This new definition raised some very interesting questions. If a sub-commissioner went on land and found a crop sown, it must have been done by labour and by expenditure, and he was to make a deduction because there happened to be a crop; whereas if it were grass land, and there had been no exceptional labour to make a crop, he would value it in a different way. This was what the new definition came to. So, whether a sub-commissioner went on the land after a crop was reaped would determine whether he was to make the deduction which would be necessary by reason of the definition introduced. This showed that it was not going too far to describe the Bill as a revolutionary measure. There were many other provisions which would be heard of in the Debate, but he was referring to those which were mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, and which, therefore, might be supposed to be the most contentious. The Bill proposed to abolish the right of ejectment for the non-payment of rent as against a middleman. If a middleman had subtenants he might bring an action of ejectment for non-payment of rent, and, if he recovered, the land was not to be given up whether the rent was paid or not, and a second action was to be brought by the landowner for the recovery of the land. Was that provision drafted by anybody who knew anything abut Ireland? Surely to require a landlord to bring an action against subtenants was beyond all fairness and reason in dealing with the rights of landlords. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: "Nonsense!"] Well, the hon. and learned Member was not particularly anxious to see the rights of landlords safeguarded in the matter of the recovery of land. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: "Any rights they have."] In the view of the hon. and learned Member, probably, their rights were less than those recognised by this Bill. Another provision to be noticed was that dealing with property put into Court by reason of the owners being minors or lunatics; in future, perhaps, a majority of owners would come in the second category. It was actually proposed that when the Court came to deal with these cases the land should become subject to perpetual tenancies when lettings were made by the Court. This in itself was a revolution. A man might die leaving several farms and one or two sons in infancy; the Court had no way of managing the property except by making lettings, and hitherto it had always made them to terminate with the minority, so that a minor could take possession on attaining majority; but the Bill proposed to put an end to that and to make the tenants admitted during minority perpetual tenants, so that the heir could not get the property into his own hands when he came of age. On what recommendation of the report was this put into the Bill? It was unanimously disagreed to by the Select Committee; where did the right hon. Gentleman get the justification for such a revolution? The right hon. Gentleman said that the Conservatives of England were coming to a better frame of mind and were shaking off the landlord party of Ireland. But let the Conservatives of England and Scotland pay attention to the real as distinct from the apparent meaning of the Bill. Everything that was attempted in Ireland would sooner or later be attempted in England. There was before the House a Bill to make applicable to England the terms of the legislation for Ireland of 1881 and 1887. The confiscation embodied in every clause of this Bill would be demanded in England sooner or later. The matter might be dull or technical, but every clause must be sifted, and even those who represented what had been described as a junta of irreconcilable landlords might in the long run succeed in modifying the bitterness of the Chief Secretary.

*MR. E. F. VESEY KNOX (Cavan, W.) said that, if the Bill were a revolution, it was, at all events, a peaceful revolution, and seldom had a Bill of this importance been received with such general acceptance. Its opponents, according to the hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin, were going to fight, not to the last ditch, but to the last extremity, which was a little pleasanter phrase. Still, if the Bill embodied so much confiscation, it was strange they were not going to divide against the Second Reading. The hon. and learned Gentleman had shown what might happen if certain constructions were put upon the Bill, but it was only by assuming that the Commissioners would be unreasonable men that he had been able to make out a case against the Bill. He could understand a man who still objected to the provisions of the Act of 1881 objecting to this Bill, but when you had reconciled your conscience to that Act there ought to be no difficulty about this Bill. It seemed strange that Ulster, which was so useful to the Opposition on the Home Rule Bill, should be forgotten on a Land Bill. It seemed strange that the hon. and learned Gentleman throughout his speech, not merely in the wording, but in the whole texture and substance of his speech, should have forgotten that there was such a place as Ulster. Not one of his arguments took into account the province of Ulster. On the question of Home Rule, it was shown that Ulster was about equally divided, but with two or three exceptions Ulster was united in favour of this Bill. Why, if divided Ulster was worth so much to the hon. and learned Gentleman's friends two years ago, was a united Ulster to be neglected now? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary referred to some of the evidence before the Committee last year, as to the practice of the Land Court upon the question of the occupation-right. This occupation-right, the right to have a lower rent fixed than the competition rent, was of the essence of the Ulster custom, and there was plenty of evidence to be obtained as far back as 50 years, that that custom then ruled the fixing of rents in the province of Ulster. The Devon Commission reported that—

> "a feeling of proprietorship seems to have grown up in the tenant."

The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh absolutely denied that there was any sort of half property in the soil belonging to the tenant. In saying that, he denied the Ulster custom. Dual ownership in the soil was of the essence of the Ulster custom, and when the hon. and gallant Member denied it, he was going against the whole history of Ulster. Two or three centuries ago, when men were brought over to colonise Ulster, there was a sort of feudal arrangement. They were to fight for their land, but they were to have in that land a certain right, not a full proprietary right, but a right distinct from the tenant-right custom which prevailed in this country. The Devon Commission reported that the Ulster tenant-right amounted to—

> "an embryo copyhold, which must decline in value to the proprietor."

He was speaking of a custom that grew up in Ulster from the circumstances of plantation. An embryo copyhold went a good way to form a dual ownership. The Devon Commission also reported:—

> "It is not uncommon for a tenant without a lease to sell the bare privilege of occupancy with possession of his farm without any visible sign of improvement having been made by him, at from 10 to 16 up to 20 and even 40 years' purchase of the rent; and the comparative tranquillity of that district may perhaps be mainly attributed to that fact."

He ventured to say that all elderly men who remembered the circumstances of Ulster before any Land Act was passed would agree in saying that, instead of the land Acts increasing the value of the tenant-right in Ulster, they had rather diminished it. In 1844, before the Town Lands Valuation Committee of that year, Mr. Senior, an Assistant Poor Law Commissioner gave an account of the Ulster tenant-right. He said:—

> "My view of tenant-right is, that it is the difference between the rent actually charged by the landlord, according to the custom of the country, and the utmost competition value; therefore, if the rent on a large estate is low, and confidence in the landlord is great, the amount of tenant-right per acre will be very large."

Then he was asked:—

> "May not the tenant-right be taken to be an indication of the difference between the rent paid to the landlord and the letting value of the land?"

And he answered:—

> "That is exactly the definition I have before given of the custom."

It was said at the same time by Mr. Hancock:—

> "An attempt on the part of landlords, to convert the value which their property bears in the shape of tenant-right into increased rent, would certainly be regarded by the tenant as an invasion of tenant-right."

Of course it might be said that this was absolutely illogical. He thought it was. The Ulster custom was one of the most illogical things in the world, but it had made a great difference between Ulster and the other provinces of Ireland. The essence of the custom was the occupation-right of the tenant, the right of the tenant to continue the occupation of his farm at less than full competition rent. In 1863 Judge Longfield, of the Landed Estates Court, was asked before the Land Tenure Committee, the following questions:—

> "You are aware that the sum paid for tenant-right represents a sum paid for occupancy and not a sum paid for Compensation?"

And he said: "Yes, certainly so." Then he was asked:—

> "Whenever you introduce the custom of Ulster tenant-right and bring it into the consideration of questions of compensation, you are mixing totally different things?"

The answer was: "They are totally different things." So that they had this opinion years ago, that, by the Ulster custom, there was an occupation-right in the tenant which gave him a right to have his rent kept lower than the competition rate. His contention was, that up till now the course the House had pursued to Ulster had been to rob the tenant of the occupation-right, and it was only now proposed to restore it to him by law. The effect of the Land Act of 1870 was, to raise the rents of the Ulster tenants. There was no doubt that that Act was followed throughout Ulster by a large increase in rents, and it was found that, although the House had sanctioned the Ulster custom in vague words in the Act of 1870, there was no definite provision which would give the tenants a right to the lower rent due to occupation interest, and in practice in most cases under the Act of 1881 occupation-right had not been allowed for as it ought to have been. So far as Ulster was concerned he held it to be clear that what the right hon. Gentleman proposed by his section dealing with occupation-right was only a restoration of a right which, according to the Devon Commission, existed more than half-a-century ago. The object of the Act of 1881, it was generally understood, was to apply the Ulster custom to the rest of Ireland; so that if it were proved that the Ulster custom included this occupation-right it was clear that it was intended, by the Act of 1881, to give the occupation-right to the rest of Ireland. As to sub-Section 3 of Section 5, dealing with improvements, the House would no doubt hear a good deal more of it before it was done with, and he would with deference suggest that, if anything, this Bill gave the tenant somewhat less than he possessed to-day. The sub-Section said :—

> "In fixing a fair rent for a holding the Court shall have regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant respectively, and where it appears to the Court that any improvement, made by the tenant on the holding, and not paid for or otherwise compensated by the landlord, has resulted in an increase of the letting value of the holding, beyond what the holding would at the time of fixing the fair rent, let for without such improvement, such increase of letting value shall be included in the tenant's interest."

This sub-Section might be expected to work in this way. The sub-Commissioners on coming upon the land would see the improvement, and would try to imagine what the state of the land was before the improvement was made, and what a tenant would at the present time give at competition value for the land if it had remained in that state. This was open to the objection that it would introduce into the fixing of fair rents an imaginary being well known in assessment cases in England—"the hypothetical tenant"—who was a very remarkable person. When the Chief Secretary referred to the differences between the valuations of valuers in Ireland, he might have remembered that there were valuers in England who were not infallible, and these valuers had made great play with "the hypothetical tenant." When lands or buildings were unlet they introduced this supposititious personage, and asked: "What would he give for them?" He doubted, therefore, whether by this sub-Section the right hon. Gentleman had not introduced the difficulty of "the hypothetical tenant" to swell the already existing number of difficulties surrounding Irish land law. The hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin objected to this provision as confiscatory, but, having regard to the use of the term "letting value," which seemed to him to point to competition value, which was not what he understood as a fair rent, he rather doubted whether the sub-Section as now drafted would give the Irish tenant as much as he was entitled to according to Lord Justice Fitzgibbon's view of the law. At any rate, if the sub-Section were capable of the interpretation which he had put upon it, it would prove that the right hon. Gentleman had not tried by this Bill to confiscate the property of the landlords, but had endeavoured to do his best to act fairly between the two classes. In Committee the Bill would need amendment as much from the point of view of the representatives of the tenants, as from the point of view of the representatives of the landlords. There was one part of the Bill to which the hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin had paid no attention, namely, the part dealing with the exclusion from the Land Acts of tenancies in certain holdings. That was even a more vital part of the Bill than the Improvements Clause. Up to the present time little more than half of the Irish tenants had been able to get fair rents fixed. He asked Englishmen to consider that fact. How many tenants were there in Great Britain who were paying at the present moment the same rent that they were paying in 1879? He did not suppose that more than five per cent. of them at the outside were doing so. Yet it was a fact that in Ireland only a little more than half the tenants, certainly less than two-thirds of them, had been able in all these years to get their rents fixed. Having regard to this fact, the exclusions dealt with in this Bill were of greater importance than some of the more contentious provisions. Some of the present exclusions were most absurd. There was, for example, the exclusion that kept out pasture of over £50 valuation. Could a more important improvement be made in many cases than the laying down of a farm of 200 acres in permanent pasture? But that was one improvement which, if the farm were let for pasture, would exclude the holding from the fair rent clauses. In raising the limit from £50 valuation to £200, the right hon. Gentleman had neither exceeded the needs of agriculture nor the demands of justice. Then there was the case of town parks. He did not think that all Members understood how absurd were some of the conditions affecting town parks. A town park was land which, on a certain day in August 1881, was used by a person living in a town, and which had an extra value as accommodation land. In the village of Dundrum, in County Down, there were at one time, some 300 people, two very pretty churches, and 17 public-houses. Soon after the Land Act was passed, the village was held not to be a

*Mr. E. F. Vesey Knox.*

town for the purposes of the Act. However, years went on, and the population rather diminished. A case then came before the Land Commissioners, who held that a holding of three acres outside the village was a town park. The decision was reversed by the Court of Appeal, but the expenses of going to court in order to obtain a decision on the question whether Dundrum was a town or not, must have far exceeded the value of the fee simple of a farm three or four times the size of this field of three acres. It was absurd that the state of the law should admit of such disputes. Another case of the sort was furnished from the village of Newcastle, on the same coast. This village, in which there were about 1,500 people, was held to be a town within the section of the Land Act. The question in this case was, whether the holder of a farm lived in 1881 in the village of Newcastle as his ordinary place of residence, or whether he lived in Newcastle-on-Tyne in England. If the tenant could have proved that his ordinary residence was in Newcastle-on-Tyne he would have been able to get a fair rent fixed, on the ground that he did not reside in a town near his holding. If he lived in the village of Newcastle he could not have a fair rent fixed. Evidence was given showing how many nights during the year 1881 he lived in the village, and how many nights he lived in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and, in the end the Court came to the conclusion that he lived mostly in the village or town in Ireland. There were innumerable cases of the kind showing that the existing provisions as to town parks could not be left as they were. Then there was the exclusion of demesne land. Under the existing law, land, on which there was a tumble-down house which the landlord had no intention of rebuilding, and perhaps a wall and a few old trees, was held to be demesne land, and the rent of a farm upon such land could not be fixed. There were numbers of cases of that kind throughout the country. The present provisions as to demesne land were in his opinion absolutely absurd. Where there was real demesne land let not the ownership be disturbed, but where there was no resident owner, and where there was no possibility of the lands being resumed as demesne land, it would be absurd to continue to apply the existing law. Another matter which ought to be changed was the landlords' right of pre-emption. In theory, possibly, a case could be made out for it. The hon. and learned Gentleman had contended that the right of pre-emption was the only barrier in the way of excessive demands for the transfer of tenant-right. But it was a fallacy to suppose that the average landlord had the money with which to pay for the interests of his tenants. The vast majority of the landlords of Ireland had no spare money to invest in this form of property, and it was an error to suppose that this right of pre-emption formed an economic barrier against excessive demands. Upon the question of occupation-rights, it was no doubt possible to spin verbal arguments to show that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had given too much on the one side or the other, but with regard to the important question of the exclusions from the operation of the Land Acts it was not possible to present to the House any reasonable case against the proposals in the Bill. In conclusion, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having introduced this measure, which he believed to be just and moderate. Bill or no Bill, there must be large reductions of rent in Ireland. Economic circumstances demanded such reductions. Since the rents were fixed, prices of agricultural produce had fallen enormously, and unless prices rose again, the reduction in the rents would have to be large. The Bill would not probably make those reductions larger than they would otherwise be by more than five per cent. But the Bill, though it was not a revolutionary Bill, was a good and just Bill; and while it had been welcomed by the vast majority of Irish Members representing popular constituencies, the hon. and learned Member for Dublin University, though he represented a constituency in which there were no tenant-farmers, and was safe from all blasts of popular feeling, did not dare to divide the House against the Second Reading.

*Mr. J. F. LEESE (Lancashire, N.E., Accrington), said, he ventured to intervene in this Debate with some diffidence, because he recognised the extreme complexity and difficulty of some of the issues which the introduction of the Bill raised. But, inasmuch as he had the honour of serving on the Committee on the administration of the Irish Land Acts last Session, and as his name appeared as a signatory of the report of the Committee—on which the Bill was based—he felt an obligation to give some few reasons for the faith that was in him. Outside the Irish land question the conviction had grown upon him that it was next to impossible for Englishmen to deal with Irish questions, and that it was infinitely better to have left this question for ultimate settlement by Irishmen in Ireland, who had full knowledge of Irish decisions and customs. In the Act of 1870 there was a presumption in favour of the tenant. Section 5 of that Act provided that all improvements on a holding should, until the contrary was proved, be deemed to have been made by the tenant and his predecessor in title. That, so far, was clear and straightforward, and there could be no doubt as to what it meant. But, unfortunately, six exceptions to the section followed. It was usually thus when England legislated in regard to Ireland. What was given with one hand was taken away with the other. Those six exceptions, according to the evidence taken before the Committee, practically annulled the presumption in favour of the tenant. Of course, if the presumption of ownership of the improvements of the tenant was not permitted, the improvements would be lost to the tenant unless he could prove them. The onus of proof was therefore cast upon the tenant. It would also be well to point out that although these exceptions applied to the presumption in the tenants' favour in all the rest of Ireland, they did not apply to Ulster. This was an inequality at any rate demanding redress. One of the witnessess examined by the Committee, Mr. Bailey, said that these exceptions put great difficulties in the way of the tenants in proving their improvements, and that the smaller Irish farmers did not, as a rule, keep either books or accounts. When the House considered that out of 490,000 agricultural tenants in Ireland there were 396,000 holdings of under £20, it might well believe Mr. Bailey when he said he could not recollect a case where a tenant produced books. This condition of things made it interesting to know what sort of evidence was permitted before the Sub-Commission Courts. Mr. Bailey said the Commissioners took the legal evidence that was allowed in any Court of Law. But how did that work in the case of improvements more than 20 years old? The third exception took away the presumption in favour of the tenant in this case, and if he had not seen the improvement made himself, or unless he produced as a witness some one who had, he could not, in the absence of documentary proof, prove his improvement at all, and, of course, hearsay evidence would be excluded. In the case he had just quoted he believed it was argued that, except buildings and the reclamation of waste land, there were no improvements that were 44 years old, that was dating back to 1850; but it was quite clear that that argument would not apply when the Act was passed in 1870, for there must have been many improvements still unexhausted. He would ask the House to recall the underlying fact that all improvements were done by the tenants. If this was so, who was hurt if the Law said that the Courts of Law must in future treat it as a fact proved in Court—a presumption subject always to the landlord's right to displace the presumption of proof if he could? But if it was the fact that the Irish tenant did these improvements, why should he be forced to prove a fact that all the world knew to be admitted? It had been proved in evidence many times before the Committee that if the tenant did not improve the holding it would not be improved at all. He presumed that no one, even those chiefly interested for the landlords, would say that improvements were undesirable. What encouragement was there to a tenant to put his money into his holding and to improve it if his right to abatement of rent in respect of the improvement was made so difficult to prove? He submitted that the highest public policy demanded that these exceptions should be swept away, and that the presumption should be in favour of the tenant until the landlord proved the contrary; and he could not conceive of any serious ground of complaint, especially as the landlord was not to be bound by the strict rules of evidence, but was to give such information as was available whether legally admissible in evidence or not. With regard to the question of the statutory term, which the Bill proposed to reduce from 15 years to 10 years, the evidence given before the Committee was strongly in favour of the reduction. Mr. Cunningham told the Committee that 15 years was too long, and that the rents fixed in the first five years—between 1881 and 1885—were now too high. There was a fall of 30 per cent. in the prices of store cattle. and according to another witness it was a far more serious matter in Ireland to have a fall in store cattle than to have a bad harvest. Mr. Cunningham went on to say that there had been no corresponding fall in the cost of production, and he added—

> "I should say that those tenants who had their rents fixed for 1885 have suffered a 20 or 30 per cent. fall in prices, since then; and, of course, have had their means of living vastly diminished."

Mr. O'Keeffe, another witness, said—

> "I think 15 years is too long; if a tenant is over-rented it would crush him altogether."

The hon. Member for South Antrim put this question to Mr. O'Keeffe:—

> "But if a tenant happens to be able to struggle through 15 years at the judicial rent, is it not, in your own mind, *primâ-facie* evidence that he has not been over-rented?"

To that Mr. O'Keeffe replied—

> "No; it is astonishing what rents some tenants will pay under trying conditions."

Messrs. Greer, Roberts, and Neligan took, substantially the same view. On the other hand, Messrs. Doyle, Heard, and Bailey preferred a longer term, though, speaking generally, the effect of their evidence was rather against seven or five years than against a reduction to 10 years. The hon. and learned Member for Dublin University had raised, in the course of his speech that evening two objections to reducing the statutory term. The first was, that the constant re-valuation of farms would upset and disturb the country; and the second, that tenants would allow their farms to deteriorate when the end of the term was approaching, with a view to getting larger reductions of rent after the re-valuation. But Mr. Greer, the legal chairman of a sub-Commission, told the Committee that he thought a seven-years' re-valuation would rather settle than disturb the country; nor did he anticipate that it would cause enormous litigation, as the hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) suggested. The wilful deterioration theory had likewise no foundation. Mr. Bailey stated in his evidence that, if drains and fences were not kept up, the sub-Commissioners did not allow for them in fixing the rents. Mr. Heard spoke of a Recorder who raised the fixed rent on a tenant against whom deliberate deterioration had been proved. It would, therefore, be a dangerous practice for the tenants to resort to. Both Mr. Heard and Mr. Roberts were of opinion deliberate deterioration would be very exceptional; but Mr. Doyle, indulging in prophecy, said "it would certainly be done in many cases." But here again, if he might be allowed to appeal to the common-sense of the House he would suggest that the Irish tenant was not such a fool as to deteriorate wilfully his farm. Just look at the facts. There were 396,000 tenancies in Ireland under £20 a year. Suppose that such a tenant desired to get a reduction of rent, and in order to do so resorted to deliberate deterioration. Such deterioration would begin two years before the expiration of the statutory term; and it would take two years to cure or even more. Supposing that he got 10 per cent. of a reduction, 10 per cent. on £20 a year would be £2 a year for ten years, or, in all, £20. The tenant would himself, out of his own money, have to remedy the deterioration and he would, therefore, really be the sufferer if he permitted himself to get a reduction of rent by fraudulent practices. He regarded this argument as a rather foolish and unnecessary insult to put upon the Irish tenant on very insufficient and prophetic evidence, and he did not know whether the insult to the tenant's honesty or his good sense was the greater. It was not conceivable that, in his own interest, he would be so dishonest, or so foolish, as to wilfully deteriorate his farm under circumstances when he would himself have to cure the evils he created without any assistance from his landlord. He now turned to Section 1 of the Bill, which proposed to reduce the statutory period to 10 years. If that statutory term were so reduced, what were they to say to the tenancies started, or rents fixed, during 1881 to 1886? Take the cases of rents fixed in 1885—that was just 10 years ago—if the 15 years still remained the term, they would have five years more to run at a rent which Mr. Cunningham said was 20 to 30 per cent. above the real value to-day, so that if not altered and if the present law were not assimilated to current terms, these men would have to pay—not a fair rent, but from 20 to 30 per cent. above a fair rent. He only hoped, as an Englishman, that the efforts of the Select Committee—which were by no means light—might result in bringing peace and some measure of prosperity to the Irish tenant farmer, who had had struggles enough, and that he might now have some prospect given him that he would secure the reasonable comforts of existence by the advantages afforded by this Bill.

*Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) remarked that the right hon. Gentleman had, upon the Introduction of this measure, asked for a full and impartial consideration of the proposals in the Bill, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to such consideration, because he (Mr. Macartney) did not recollect any proposal of a more grave and far-reaching character than those contained in his Bill. He regretted that in moving the Second Reading the right hon. Gentleman should have used language which appeared to him to be absolutely unjustifiable, and which was certainly not calculated to induce those who might not be in complete sympathy with his proposals to give that consideration which he claimed for them on the First Reading. The right hon. Gentleman had burst out again into one of those savage and bitter attacks upon Irish landlords, which the House had been too much accustomed to hear from him. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman thought that, by such a course, he would make the passage of the Bill through Parliament more easy; but he regretted that, on this occasion, he had used language which he must know must be highly irritating to a class which, though they might be, as he described them, a falling class, had not themselves contributed so much as the Legislation of that House to their misfortunes. He would like to ask the House to consider whether this measure could be classified as a mere amendment of details, or whether it was a measure, the main proposals of which practically amounted to a virtual reconstruction of the Act of 1881. Anybody who had closely examined the provisions of the measure would be compelled to say that this was not a measure for the amendment of details, but was one which practically and in reality reconstructed the main provisions of the Act of 1881. He admitted that the House had reason to be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for his candour on one point, for he had told them that his contribution to the Irish Land Question did not contain one single element of finality, and that this was the first of a long series of measures which were to investigate the rental of Ireland until, he supposed, it approximated to the view of those politicians who held that the landlord had no right to anything except prairie value. If the provisions of this Bill passed in anything like their present shape, he might say for himself that he did not believe that many successors would be required to this measure in order to attain to the ideal of Irish Land reformers. This Bill dealt, as it was intended to deal, a blow to the Irish landlords from which they were never meant to recover. The more one examined the provisions the more certain was it that that would be the result of its passing. He submitted to the House there was only one thing which could justify that House in dealing such a blow at the Irish landlord, and that was the necessity and the condition of the tenants. The question he would like to ask the House was:—Was the necessity of the tenants in Ireland so great—is their position under existing legislation so precarious and so unprotected—that in order to guard them effectually, Parliament and this House will be compelled to assent to the proposals of the measure brought before it on this occasion, and to adopt certain principles of action which were strongly and successfully repudiated by the authors of the Bill of 1881, and which they absolutely declined to have anything to do with? He submitted that the Report of the majority of the Committee which recently sat on the subject was not a reliable guide for the House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the fact that the majority were compelled to leave the Committee Room was a matter for complacent self-satisfaction. He disagreed with him on that point, because he thought that the achievements of the right hon. Gentleman in the chair of that Committee were unprecedented in the annals of Parliamentary Committees; and, outside the annals of Parliamentary Committees could only find a parallel in the action of the Progressive Chairman of the London County Council. It was an achievement which could only be looked at by those interested in arriving at a settlement of the question as most unfortunate and most unhappy. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech in introducing the Bill, used an expressson with regard to the Report which was absolutely accurate. He said the Report represented the opinions of the most important section in Ireland. With that one would agree when they recollected whom it was he regarded as the most important section in Ireland. It contained their opinion, but no evidence whatever in support of it. He could not understand any reason why this Report should not have been written in the first week in May instead of the month of August of last year; or why, indeed, the Members of the majority should have taken the trouble to meet together on three or four occasions to debate the Report, instead of handing the work over to the hon. Member for North Kerry. In that case there would have been a coherence about the Report which was now wanting. The right hon. Gentleman attempted to justify the provisions of the Bill by a comparison between the reductions of rent in Ireland and those which had taken place in England since agricultural depression set in. The analogy, however, was not a sound one, and could lead to no correct conclusions, because the circumstances of agricultural life in the two countries were entirely dissimilar. It was fully shown in the Report of the Bessborough Commission that it was not the custom to exact the full commercial rent in Ireland as in England, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, in introducing the Bill of 1881, endorsed that opinion, and further stated that rentals in England had risen more rapidly than in Ireland. Upon the question of reductions of rent the evidence was in favour of the Irish landlord. Out of 157,178 cases of judicial rents fixed up to March 1894, in nearly 12,000 cases, or a little over 8 per cent., there had been no previous alteration of rent as against the tenant before the date of the judicial fixing of rent; and Mr. Barnes, a valuer of large experience in Ireland, who had valued over half-a-million of acres, told the Committee that he very seldom came across cases of increase of rentals. In England, moreover, the large reductions which had been alluded to were restricted to certain well-defined areas where the agricultural interest had been enormously depressed, whereas in Ireland the reductions had been general all over the country. He would take as an illustration the county of Lincoln, which stood at the head of the agricultural counties of England, and which had suffered severely from the depression. It appeared from the interesting Report of Mr. Wilson Fox, what, indeed, was stated by the right hon. Member for Midlothian, that rentals had risen much more rapidly in England than in Ireland, and that consequently no correct conclusions could be drawn from a comparison of the relative reductions of rental in England and Ireland. Passing from that point, he would like to turn to the right hon. Gentleman who read to the House an interesting extract from the Memoirs of Sir W. Gregory, who posed as a model Irish landlord, and he went on to attack the conduct of the person who purchased from Sir W. Gregory in the Landed Estates Court. Much as the conduct of the landlord who bought from Sir W. Gregory was to be reprobated, at all events that gentleman walked off with the "swag," which he obtained under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, and no doubt, like all the other estates sold in the Landed Estates Court, his Bill of Sale held out the inducement that the rents could freely be raised, and that the property could bear a large increase in the rental. He did not know that what took place so many years ago was a sufficient justification for the provisions of this Bill, but, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman, and those who supported the Bill, might at this time discover some better and sounder reasons for a great Land Bill than a series of events which took place 40 years ago, and which everybody knew could not, under existing legislation, be repeated now. He was not there, nor would any Irish landlord care to defend what might have been done by some speculators under the Landed Estates Act; for there were cases in which speculators, having bought under that Act, did, in fact, carry out in practice the inducements held out to them when they bought. That was no foundation at the present moment for proposals which would fall with great severity on a large body of Irish landlords who could not be held accountable for things done under an Act of Parliament. He held strongly the necessity of giving to the tenant not only adequate but ample protection for the improvements he carried out on his holding. But the right hon. Gentleman had entirely failed—and the evidence before the Select Committee also entirely failed—to prove that the position of the Irish tenant was such that he required the proposals of the Bill to safeguard, his improvements. And further, the proposals now made were not consistent with the equity of the case. The right hon. Gentleman said that from the evidence before the Committee it was clear that undoubtedly the intention of Parliament was imperfectly guarded, so that the Courts in Ireland had felt bound to decide in a sense that had the effect of defeating the intention of Parliament. That passage might mean that the Irish Courts, and especially the Court of Appeal, felt that, in some way or other they were bound by the language of the Act to construe it against its clear intention. If that were what the right hon. Gentleman intended there was not a syllable in any judgment of the Court to justify that suggestion. But it might mean, as the Report of the majority of the Select Committee distinctly stated, that the intention of the Legislature had not been carried into effect in the judgment in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, and seemed to have been defeated in the practice of the Court in fixing rents. Upon that statement the Report of the majority of the Committee made two recommendations: Firstly, that improvements, of whatever character, should be exempt from rent; and secondly, that the definitions and limitations imported from the Act of 1870, should not apply to the administration of the fair rent provisions of the Act of 1881. The Bill, they were told, was founded on the Report of the Committee, and therefore it was important that the House should consider whether these recommendations were within the scope of the Act of 1881, or whether they were not only absolutely at variance with the provisions of that Act but hostile to the principle upon which it was founded. These recommendations could not be construed as mere amendments of detail: they would introduce into the land legislation of Ireland certain principles which amounted to "a virtual reconstruction of the Act of 1881." First of all he would ask the House to consider, with regard to the Act of 1870, whether or not it was the intention of the authors of the Act of 1881 to incorporate that Act? There could be no doubt as to that. In the first place, there was the incorporating section. It might be said that that section had had too much inuflence on the Act of 1881. But there was a most important question put after the first reading of the Bill in 1881 by the present Lord Ashbourne (then Mr. Gibson). And Mr. Law, the then Attorney General, replied that the Act of 1870 was meant to apply and to govern the proposals that had then just been laid before the House. With regard to the recommendations that improvements of whatever character should be exempted from rent, he asked—Was that the intention of the authors of the Act of 1881? Certainly it was not the intention of the right hon. Member for Midlothian. He drew a very clear distinction between improvements on which a tenant should be rented, and those on which he should not, and he assented to the proposition of Mr. W. H. Smith, that there were various classes of improvements which would fall under the definitions of improvements for which a tenant was not entitled to be exempt. That being so, he would ask the House to consider what the practice with regard to improvements had been. The paragraph in the Report of the Select Committee, which referred to the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, and which dealt with the question of the practice with regard to improvements, like many other paragraphs were absolutely misleading. That paragraph stated that the Land Commission in that case interpreted the direction in the Act to mean, that all letting value resulting from tenants' improvements was to be excluded from consideration in fixing a fair rent. The decision of the Land Commission was stated in that paragraph to be unanimous, but it was not unanimous. [An Hon. Member: "The Report does not say it was."] At any rate it did not say it was not. The Report went on to say, that the Court of Appeal held, by a majority of the Judges, that the direction of the Act not to allow any rent in respect of the tenants' improvements must be taken to mean, not what the language of the Act conveyed to the ordinary mind, but something different and much more complex, namely, that the tenant was entitled to a percentage on his outlay in making the improvement, but that any remainder of letting value due to his improvement was to be divided between him and the landlord according to the discretion of the] Land Commissions, having regard to the interest of the landlord and tenant respectively. In this case the decision of the Court of Appeal, represented in the Report as that of a majority, was absolutely unanimous on the point alluded to. Lord Justice Fitzgibbon impressed that upon the Committee repeatedly. Then the paragraph represented that the remainder of the letting value due to the tenant's improvements after the percentage on his outlay had been allowed to him was to be divided between him and the landlord, according to the judicial discretion of the Land Commission. Now the decision of the Court was perfectly clear. The Court distinctly held that the whole increase of letting value might be given in certain circumstances to the landlord, and that where it was not given to the landlord entirely it was to be apportioned between the landlord and the tenant, having regard to the just interest of both. The practice of the Commissioners was dealt with in another paragraph of the Report, and here again, Members who imagined that in the Report of the majority they would find a correct guide as to the weight of evidence, would be wofully disappointed. The Committee stated that they learned with extreme surprise from the majority of the official witnesses, including three legal assistant Land Commissioners, and two lay assistant Commissioners, as well as the County Court Judge of Kerry, the County Court Valuer, and Mr. Greer, that the practice was to give the landlord, after allowing the tenant a percentage for his outlay, any remainder of letting value. That was an entirely misleading representation of the evidence. Mr. Greer's evidence would not support that assertion. And with regard to the three Legal Assistant Land Commissioners the House must recollect that the Legal Commissioners had nothing whatever to do with the assessing of the value of improvements. The Legal Commissioners had nothing whatever to do with the question of the value of the improvements, or how much of the increased letting value was to go to the landlord, and how much to the tenant. The County Court judge of Kerry, who was quoted as an authority for the statement made in paragraph 4 of the Report had stated that he never interfered in questions of value, and had repudiated the statement attributed to him in that paragraph. The learned County Court Judge had also stated that if he had to deal with the increased letting value, he would apportion it between the parties. The important evidence on this question was that of the Lay Commissioners, three of whom had stated that they made it their practice to give the whole of the increased letting value to the tenants. To sum up, seven Commissioners all agreed that, after the tenant had received a percentage on the costs of his improvement work—which they generally put at 5 per cent.—practically nothing remained over to be dealt with. The House should recollect that, even assuming a case where the whole of the increased value had been left to be be given to the landlord, that did not take away from the tenant the whole of the result of his improvements. The increased letting value was not commensurate with the increased produce. The tenant would get a very large proportion of the increased production of the land arising from his improvements. If the landlord's increased letting value were estimated at one third part, the tenant would get two-thirds as the result of his improvements. The conclusion which the

House had to arrive at was as to the protection which the Irish tenant now enjoyed under the Act of 1881, and whether under that Act he was sufficiently encouraged to make improvements. Anybody acquainted with Ireland could not for a moment doubt that the Irish tenants, as a body, knew that their improvements were adequately protected. Mr. Greer had told them that there could be no doubt upon this question, and, that upon lands where he had fixed rents in 1881, 1882, and 1883, he was able to see the faith which the tenants had in the administration of the Act. Anybody who lived sufficiently long in Ireland must know that, so far as the improvements which the Irish tenant was in the habit of making, and which he had carried out in times past under the Act of 1881, those improvements were made in the absolute conviction that he was protected. Then, he would ask, was Clause 5 consistent with the equity of the occasion? The Chief Secretary had admitted that that was one of the necessary conditions of his legislation. The proposals made in that clause had never appeared in any Bill submitted to Parliament until about the year 1883. From 1850 till 1883 innumerable Bills had been presented by representatives from Ireland, who, it could not be denied, were active, energetic, advanced land-reformers. But this project was never included until after the No Rent Manifesto and the suggestion of "prairie value" had been put forward. These proposals had been adequately described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, and the Member for the University of Dublin was amply justified in describing them as revolutionary. The present Lord Chancellor, in describing the proposals of the Bill of 1883, had said that it proposed to hand over to the tenants that which they had no right to, and he had also said that tenants, as well as landlords, must hold their property according to equity, and, that it was the duty of the House of Commons to hold the balance fairly between them. The Chancellor had also repudiated the notion that, because certain claims were made by sections of the Irish tenantry, there was therefore any obligation to meet those claims by legislation; and he had said that no Government could meet

the proposals put forward by the Irish agriculturists. Those proposals were precisely the same as were dealt with in Clause 5 of the present Bill. There were other provisions of a different character in this Bill, which amounted to a virtual reconstruction of the Act of 1881. As an instance, he would take the sub-section dealing with demesne lands. It had been sought to show that thousands of tenants were excluded either from the clauses of that Act or from the interpretation put upon those clauses by the Court of Appeal in Ireland.

*Mr. KNOX explained that what he meant to say was, that there were numbers of tenants who did not go into Court because they would have had their cases ruled out.

*Mr. MACARTNEY replied that he was sure there was not an Irish tenant out of Court who was not out of Court for very excellent reasons.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, interposing, said, that it was not reasonable to take four thousand odd as the number of cases that had been excluded. Every case of exclusion decided in the Courts might rule a thousand other cases out.

*Mr. MACARTNEY said, that the number of Irish tenants swelled with every argument. The number of cases of exclusion that had come before the Courts was 56,823, but of these only a very small proportion had been excluded by reason of the clauses of the Act. The exclusion of demesne lands, as an element of hardship, was extremely difficult to prove; but the words in the Act showed that the intention of the Legislature was distinct. They showed that Parliament knew there was a considerable number of tenants in Ireland who were occupying demesne lands as agricultural tenants, and they proved also that it was not the intention of Parliament to give those tenants occupying demesne lands for agricultural purposes the advantages of the Act. He should like to say a word with reference to the attack made on the Court of Appeal; that it had limited the operation of the Act, and restricted the benefit conferred on the Irish tenant. What had been the action of the Court of Appeal? —211 cases had come up from the sub-Commission; 202 decisions had been given, 107 in favour of the landlord, and

95 in favour of the tenant; 90 appeals had been made by the landlord and 112 by the tenant. No doubt, there had been decisions of great importance on the landlord side, and evidence was forthcoming to show that the decisions given on the side of the tenant had been equally important, and had conferred on the tenant as much benefit under the Act as had been conferred on the landlord. Another provision of the Bill, which amounted to a virtual re-construction of the Act of 1881, was the provision to interfere with the future tenancies. This was a very serious invasion of one of the principles which the right hon. Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone) clung to—a material invasion on the residue of free contract which he left to operate in Ireland, upon which he laid the greatest emphasis, and which the right hon. Gentleman told the House would be an element of valuable consideration at some time or other in the future of Ireland. Then there was the repeal of the pre-emption clause, the right conferred by which, they were told, had not been largely taken advantage of by the Irish landlord. The Bill also contained some amendments of detail, like the shortening of the statutory term and its retrospective action. But every argument used before the Committee would be just as applicable to seven, five, three or one year as to ten years. Not one of the agricultural experts could give the Committee any reason, except a very general reason, for shortening the term from 15 to 10 years. This was a point which could be raised afterwards, no doubt; but the proposal was not one which would lessen the friction between the Irish landlord and the tenant, or tend to diminish the expense of the administration of the Act. The right hon. Gentleman said that the sub-Commission Court, to be constituted under the new procedure as the final Court of Appeal, was to consist of Commissioners now in the permanent Civil Service. Were the Valuers, who were to take the first step, to be selected from those who were now the permanent Assistant Commissioners, because they were as important as the constitution of this new Court? A Court of Appeal of high standing was necessary, for in the general deluge which would follow the application of this Bill in Ireland to the rents already fixed, and which had still some years to run, he asserted that very material damage would be inflicted on the landlords. Other two provisions of the Bill dealt with sub-letting and the extension of pasture holdings from £50 to £200. No witness that came before the Committee on the question of sub-letting had gone as far as the right hon. Gentleman. The evidence taken went, he thought, to show that no very substantial injury had arisen from the exclusion of sub-letting; every one of the Commissioners who appeared before the Committee was obliged to admit that, as regarded the necessity of carrying on agricultural operations on the land, the farmer was amply protected. As to the extension of pasture holdings, the only suggestion made was that the limitation should be raised, but the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman went far beyond even the most extreme suggestion made in the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman had repudiated with very considerable warmth the idea that his proposals were revolutionary or confiscatory, but he could not help adhering to his opinion that, though there were many minor provisions of the Bill which could with justice be considered as amendments to the legislation of 1881, there were other proposals in it so large and far-reaching that, if the House consented to give legislative effect to them, he believed the landlords of Ireland would be ruined. If those were the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman, he could not help thinking that he had given very remarkble and distinct utterance to them.

*Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said, the Bill was founded on the report issued a few months ago by a Committee after a laborious investigation. To him it seemed that that Report constituted the most important incident, in connection with Ireland, which we have had for 25 years. Parliament had passed many Acts for Ireland during that period, but had never before made any inquiry as to how they affected Ireland and whether they had produced the results intended. Hitherto Parliament had passed great measures, and had assumed that the effects would be proportionate to the time spent upon them. Our remedial legislation had been of two kinds, affecting the Church and the

Land. In the recent Debate on the Welsh Church Bill not a single remark had been made on how the Irish Church Act affected the condition of Ireland apart from religion. They had not been told what effect the withdrawal of tithes had upon particular localities. Yet it had greatly increased absenteeism in Ireland by turning tithes into so much absentee rent. Nothing had been done for local government in Ireland, although it had been established in every other part of the United Kingdom; and the Church Act and Land Acts were the only trophies of remedial legislation. Land Acts were passed in 1861, 1871, 1881, 1885, 1887, and 1891; and there had been numerous Bills which did not pass, such as the Purchase Bill of 1886 and the Evicted Tenants Bill of last year. The hon. and learned Member opposite asked the Government why they did not bring in the Evicted Tenants Bill again. It seemed to him that it would be rather a superfluous task to begin again the work they undertook last summer, which was so lightly set aside by the House of Lords. One result the inquiry of last year had made clear, and that was, that the difficulties connected with the Irish Land Question were not by any means solved. There was singular unanimity on that point. The Government had asserted it, and they had given the best evidence of their sincerity by introducing the measure before the House. But the Opposition also admitted that something more must be done, and even *The Times* newspaper admitted that some Land Bill was wanted. The Unionists who represented the north of Ireland, who had been such a stumbling-block to reform in Ireland, also admitted that the Land difficulty was not solved. But the Report of the Committee had had one effect greater than all: it had roused Ulster. Hitherto Ulster had been the great barrier to progress. When Home Rule was before the House it was said that Ulster was perfectly satisfied with the Imperial Parliament. They did not hear that story to-night. All the meetings in Ulster showed that the province was moved as it never had been moved before, and he ventured to say that the appetite of Ulster for reforms would be whetted by this Bill, and that the province would go on and look for other reforms. Therefore he thought that the rousing of Ulster was a very great point indeed. What was the reason why the House had not yet succeeded in solving the Irish Land Question? From a study of the Report, one reason of a negative character was apparent. It was not because the intelligence of the House had not fully seized the difficulty, but because the House was not able to grapple with it. Nothing was clearer than that the chief difficulty to be dealt with was not a new difficulty. What was the evil? The failure of the attempt to protect the property of tenants in their improvements. That was the object of the Act of 1870, and the object of the Act of 1881. This particular question, too, was embodied in the Report of the Devon Commission in 1845. Therefore they had this great fact, that for 50 years the House had been fully seized of the difficulty, and yet had been impotent to deal with it in any effective manner. The Report of the Committee dealt with this failure to protect improvements in the most complete manner, and it showed the four stages through which this question had passed. When the great measure of 1881 was passed, there was an absolute intention to put an end to the question. That Act provided that no rent should be made payable in respect of improvements made by the tenant. What took place in Ireland upon that? It was one of the most graphic stories that could be told. The Land Commissioners decided one case in accordance with that law, and the decision was at once appealed against. That was the first stage. The majority of the Judges in the Appeal Court held that the Act—

> "must be taken to mean not what the language of the Act conveys to the ordinary mind, but something different," viz.: "that the tenant is entitled to an annual percentage on his outlay in making the improvements, but that any remainder of letting value due to his improvements is to be divided between him and the landlord."

That was the second stage. Then the Land Commissioners having obtained this sanction, inproved on it, and so they adopted

> "the practice to give to the landlord, after allowing the tenant a percentage on his outlay, any remainder of letting value due to the tenant's improvements."

That was the third stage. Then there came the fourth stage. At first the

Land Commissioners were obliged to show in their judgment what allowance they made off the rent on account of improvements done by the tenant, and a column was reserved for this purpose, but this column became useless, and latterly it had been left out of the forms, so that, under the Land Act of 1881, the bad old practice is still in full swing in Ireland. If land was to be cultivated, if human beings were to make a living out of it, improvements must be made, and therefore, if the people who alone made the improvements were discovered, surely it was in accordance with good policy that the parties making the improvements should be protected in them. The Report of the Committee and the introduction of this Bill had made it perfectly clear that the House had, hitherto failed in the attempts to protect the Irish tenant in his improvements. In some respects the unfortunate tenant had been worse off under the Land Acts than he was before. He would give a typical case. There was a very common case in Ulster of a tenant who had a lease granted, say 30 years ago, and on his promise to spend a certain amount of money he got the land at a lower rent than he would otherwise. His lease fell in, and how was he treated? When the Court settled a fair rent for the land they added to the fair rent a sum for the value of the improvement made by the tenant. All that the landlord would have done 30 years ago would have been to refrain from making any allowance off the fair rent. He would not have added to it. Therefore, it seemed to him that in this particular case the tenant was worse off under the Land Acts than he would have been before them. Irish Members had argued more than once that that House, being full of English business men, could not grapple successfully with the Irish land question; and in the House of Lords the question suffered even worse treatment. But there was another difficulty in the way of successful land legislation when it had passed, namely, the difficulty created by the administration of the law by Irish judges. Measures having run the gauntlet with success in the Lords and Commons at Westminster, had afterwards to be administered in Ireland, and often the law administered in that remote part of the kingdom was not the law of Parliament but the law of the Irish judges. He did not wish to say a word against judge-made law. Whilst Parliament was so congested, and whilst the two Parties obstructed each other as they did at the present time, the people would fare badly in some respects if there was no such thing as judge-made law. But this rather dangerous method of adding to the Law ought to be subject to two restrictions. The judges ought to make their law in accord with the will of Parliament on the one hand, and in accord with public opinion on the other. These restrictions were operative in England, but in Ireland, in connection with land legislation, the will of Parliament was too often set at nought, and the judges were trained to disregard the public opinion of the country. Therefore, they were likely to make mistakes, which it behoved the House to put right. If the efforts of the House to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry of Ireland were to be more successful now than in the past, they must have more regard to Irish opinion. The failures of the past were chiefly due to the fact that the House had listened too much to English opinion, and English minds could not easily grasp the difficulties surrounding the subject of Irish land. It was a curious circumstance that, after their first efforts at remedial legislation, the ratio of decrease of the population doubled. The people ran out of the country in the ten years following 1881 twice as fast as in the previous decade. When they realised that the population had diminished by one-half, that there were 30 or 40 acres of land in the country for every able-bodied man willing to work it, was it not remarkable that the people should continue to go away? Notwithstanding the great decrease in the population, the people were starving to-day. It was a disgraceful state of things, that that House found itself compelled to pass Bills after all these years as they were now doing, for the purpose of meeting an Irish famine. It ought to be clear to them that this famine did not arise from any natural causes, but solely from the bad legislation of that House. Ten millions were levied in rents in Ireland, and eleven millions in taxation. They wrung from the poor peasantry these twenty-one millions a year before they could put bread into their mouths, and the result was that the people were starving. Surely the House ought to do all that it possibly could do to lighten the burdens of these unfortunate people. Why were the farmers in Ulster so keen about this Bill? It was because they knew that they could not exist any longer under the present system. They knew that the last penny was being wrung from them, and had realised that the burden of life was too heavy for them under existing condition. The hon. Member for South Tyrone during the last six months had confessed to his constituents on many occasions that most of the action which he had taken in the House with regard to Ireland was misjudged action. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: "Not at all. I never made such a statement to my constituents, nor to anyone else."] He understood that the hon. Member had delivered speeches in which he said that he had spoken on the land question in England at many public meetings in a different spirit from the spirit in which he was speaking to them, and that this was because he had been looking at the question from a Parliamentary point of view, and had not known what was going on in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that he had never made such a statement, nor anything resembling it, in England or anywhere else.

*MR. LOUGH, of course, accepted the hon. Member's denial. He had quoted the statement from memory, and he was still of opinion that he had read something of the kind. The tone of the hon. Member's speeches in the recess—it was to the hon. Member's credit—contrasted greatly with the tone of his speeches upon the land question in the ten previous years. The hon. Member had admitted the failure of Land Acts as he had never done before. If he had misrepresented the hon. Member for South Tyrone he apologised. He did not want to look in the mouth of a gift horse, and he was glad to find that the hon. Member was willing to help them now to give some measure of justice to Ireland. He thought in the interests of the landlords they should try and satisfy the tenants. The fault of all past Land Acts was that the landlord was too well protected. The landlord and the tenant were partners together, and the landlord would gain if the tenant were satisfied. He believed it would pay the landlords to go farther than this Bill in order to reconcile the tenants. As to the subject of exclusions from the Land Act it was idle to go against the current of events. The old system in Ireland had completely passed away. The old idea of the landlord fixing the rent had gone never to return. It might be right or it might be wrong, but it was settled. Under these circumstances was it not a serious thing to fling back tenants from the courts to the position of having to deal with these landlords. He thought they ought to recognise that the tendency of legislation had been to make it impossible for the tenant and the landlord to meet, and therefore these exclusions must be a constant menace to public order. Let every tenant have free access to the courts. It would be well not to wrangle over constituional or small points. Let them grasp the serious facts of the situation. The man who was willing in these times to bring something forth out of the sodden soil of Ireland was a man who ought to be encouraged, and who ought to be treated in a liberal spirit.

*MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford), said the hon. Member who had just spoken urged the landlords to treat this question in a business spirit, and certainly he had treated it in a different spirit from the Chief Secretary, the tone of whose speech was little likely to commend itself to those inclined to treating this question in a business spirit. He did not think that he had ever known a Minister moving the Second Reading of a Bill, and claiming for it impartial consideration, go so far out of his way as the Chief Secretary had done to heap obloquy and scorn on some of those concerned—in this case the landlords of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had throughout his speech gone out of his way to sneer at the landlords, and to load them with damaging imputations. First he attacked the landlord who sold. The Chief Secretary said that the one idea—the one interest—which the landlord had in the country, was to shuffle out of it (Mr. J. Morley was understood to dissent). Well, the words were, to "get out." There were good landlords in Ireland and bad ones, but there were good landlords who were endeavouring to do their duty, as landlords in England were trying to do their duty. There were many landlords who had no intention of leaving the country. Then he produced an instance of a landlord who came to terms with a tenant and reduced his rent, and on this he based the conclusion, that all rents required reduction. If the landlord had done the reverse, no doubt the Chief Secretary would have used this as an argument for coercing such landlords by Bill. But the right hon. Gentleman went beyond this when he came to the right of pre-emption. He looked upon the right of pre-emption as absolutely the only barrier which at present existed to prevent the tenants giving enormous sums for the tenant-right, which would make it in the end impossible for them to pay the rent. The Chief Secretary said the desire of landlords for pre-emption was due to jealousy of the tenant getting a high price—the desire to buy from the tenant at a low price and sell at a high one. He challenged the Chief Secretary to give any evidence of that; to give him an instance of the extremely opprobrious suggestion he had made. Did he know one single instance in which the landlord had bought at the lower price for the purpose a few days afterwards of selling it at a higher one? [Mr. J. MORLEY: "I have heard of it."] Then the right hon. Gentleman should produce the case to the House. He defied him to do so. He did not believe it to exist, and unless the right hon. Gentleman had got chapter and verse for the statement, he did not think that on such an occasion that statement should have been made. He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman would make it again if he had the opportunity. He must say that, knowing full well how carefully the Chief Secretary usually weighed his language, he was very much astonished to hear him indulge that night in the sort of clap-trap which was sometimes used by irresponsible Members of the party opposite on some platforms, instead of devoting himself to a responsible and statesmanlike explanation of a most important and intricate Bill. One very curious feature of the speech that night was the difference in its tone compared with the speech which the Chief Secretary made on the first reading. He did not think he ever heard a speech in which the appearance of fairness and suavity of manner, which always distinguished the right hon. Gentleman when he was making a rather revolutionary proposal, were approached in such a way as to lead nine out of every ten Members who heard it to believe that the Bill was a very mild and innocent one, and to imagine that it really was an impartial attempt emanating from the right hon. Gentleman's own brain to deal with this question. But when they got the Bill they saw that the speech was one thing and the Bill was another. The voice was the voice of Jacob, but the hand was the hand of Esau. They knew where the Bill came from. It came from much the same source as seemed to have inspired the right hon. Gentleman in drawing up the majority report which gave the Member for Islington so very much satisfaction. The Chief Secretary apologising for introducing this Bill. He apologised for placing upon the House a burden which he said was heavy and almost unbearable, and which was calculated to lead to discouragement not far removed from despair. He thought the best apology he could have made to the House would have been not merely an explanation of the Bill, but a justification, and a statement of his case for it. He wished to clear away at once the idea that the landlord party in Ireland were unwilling to deal with what were obvious defects in the Act of 1881. In the minority report which he submitted on behalf of his hon. Friends last session they intimated that they were ready to deal with one point, the question of the status of the tenant, instantly. That was not an unimportant question, but one which, if they mixed it up with other questions, might not be dealt with this session, but which, if they did not mix it up with other questions, might have been passed after midnight any night by the right hon. Gentleman merely raising his hat to move the Bill. There were other non-contentious matters connected with the Act of 1881 which they were ready to settle, and which he ventured to submit were as important to the tenant, certainly as important for the peace of Ireland, as any of the provisions of this Bill. What he complained of in this Bill was that every matter which had been a matter of doubt as to whether the Land Act had failed or had carried out the intentions of its authors, and wherever that doubt was on a contentious point it had been crammed into the Bill. But wherever there were matters which were non-contentious—that was to say the doubt, the certainty in fact, of the failure of the Act in regard to procedure, the certainty of its costliness, of its delay, and of all the numerous points which had been harassing landlords and tenants alike in the past few years—in no single instance had the Chief Secretary included them in this measure. He believed that if Irish Members spoke their whole mind on this subject they would agree with him that the omissions from the Bill were almost as serious and important as the inclusions in the Bill. He wished the right hon. Gentleman had approached this matter in a different spirit. He thought his speech that night was calculated to keep discussion on a low level, and was certainly such as to make the political test the final test. He could not help thinking, when he heard him addressing the House, of the speech of the Member for Midlothian in 1881, when he introduced the Bill of that year. The Member for Midlothian established a case for that Bill. He dealt with a condition of agricultural trouble not far removed from agrarian war—of land hunger which had led in some cases to impossible rents, resulting in heartbreaking evictions. He established premisses, and worked up to a logical conclusion for those premisses. But the right hon. Gentleman that night had assumed premisses, had eschewed logic, had shaped his conclusions to his convenience. They had not heard one grievance of the Irish tenant from that Bench that night. They had had, he thought, one case, not of hardship, but one in which a landlord had stepped in to prevent hardship. He had not given the House one single instance of landlord tyranny. He had based this measure alone upon the point that the demand for legislation was universal in Ireland. If the demand for legislation meant simply a demand for a reduction of rents, he thought he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that whatever Bill he carried, he would find a demand for legislation in Ireland following it very quickly, and very much in the same direction. But he would remind the House that, only a few days before the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Bill, they had a demand made by the whole of the agricultural class of Great Britain, who had suffered infinitely more in the last few years than the Irish farmers, whose case was infinitely stronger, and who universally demanded that their grievances should be remedied. There was no action even in contemplation with regard to the case. If any impartial onlooker looked into the figures brought forward in support of the Bill, he would hardly come to the right hon. Gentleman's conclusions. There were six millions of rent decided, and a reduction of 20 per cent. had been granted. The Chief Secretary asked whether that was an excessive reduction, having in view English reductions during the same period. The right hon. Gentleman left out this very important fact, which he supposed was known to him, that the number of rents which had been raised was small, though the amount by which some rents had been raised was large. Out of the total six millions of rent, in 92 per cent. of the cases the rent had not been raised. That condition would not be paralleled in any part of England, Wales, or Scotland. It was well known that in England and Scotland rents were raised in the seventies, when prices were high; but rents were not raised at the same period in Ireland. In 92 per cent. of the cases the rents had run unchanged since the famine. Therefore a reduction of 20 per cent. was a considerable reduction. But surely the test of the matter was this. There was not one single acre of land in Ireland which could be obtained for a public urpose except by a heavy payment to thptenant for the surrender of his interest. There was not a tenant in all the four provinces of Ireland who had not waiting at his door men eager to take his farm at from 10 to 30 years' purchase of the rent Then again, looking at the bank-balances in Ireland, and especially at the tenants' banks, last week they reached the highest point which had ever been touched in the history of Ireland. They were absolutely higher by several millions than in the years 1880 and 1881. Could any English or Scotch Member point to a tenants' bank in which the balances showed the same satisfactory result? By representing men, who were prospering so well, and bound to a bargain which they could at any moment get a large sum for surrendering, as tyrannically oppressed and unable to carry out necessary improvements, the Chief Secretary found justification for proposing the most drastic changes which had ever been proposed in regard to Irish land. To give the tenant not only every improvement, but every rise in its value, to give him the presumption that all improvements were his, and the right to wipe out his bargain where he contracted not to claim his improvements, all this was to give him an enormous bonus; and when at the same time it was remembered that the landlord was limited in his rent, though the tenant was not limited in his tenant-right, it would be evident that the estimate of the reduction at 60 or 70 per cent. was rather under the mark. The Bill was not only drastic, but it did not touch some of the most important points to be dealt with. Mr. Forster, in speaking on the Bill of 1881, stated on behalf of the Government that the main object which the Government had in view was not merely a reform of the land tenure, but an increase in the number of peasant proprietors, and the relief of overcrowded districts. The Chief Secretary had not only not advanced those objects by this Bill, but he had actually pushed them back. He would take the case of two men who went into Court under the Bill of 1881, one of whom, having had a fair rent fixed, was still a tenant farmer, and the other of whom had bought his holding on the basis of the fair rent. To the former man the Chief Secretary now said that his rent had been assessed on a wrong basis; that there had been a miscarriage of law; and that he was to receive a much larger share in the produce of the soil than formerly, besides having his term shortened. But the other man, who had become a peasant proprietor, and whose rent had been fixed on exactly the same basis before he purchased, was to get no advantage or bonus whatever. Literally, by this Bill, the peasant proprietor would be at a disadvantage in selling stock in the market when compared with the tenant farmer. The tenant farmer would be able to sell stock for less. Surely the peasant proprietor would reason this with himself:—

> "Would I were as other men, especially as this tenant farmer. Here is this man who pays no rates, pays a less rent than I, and only pays that when convenient, while I pay my instalments with regularity, even if I have to fast two days a week in order to do it and to pay rates on all that I possess."

I reckon that the tenant farmer would go down to his house justified rather than the proprietor. If the Home Secretary, who had offered to wager 100 to one against the passing of this Bill, were present he would offer to bet him 100 to one that if the Bill passed they would have the whole mass of peasant proprietors at their door asking for a remission of their instalments. It was well the right hon. Gentleman should apply his mind to the question of the machinery of the Bill. At present the Bill was framed for the benefit of the sitting tenant. He had no animus against the sitting tenant. He was only too glad to see any tenant prosperous, but they could not make the whole of agriculture in Ireland prosperous if they benefited the sitting tenant at the expense of those who had to come after him. What they did for the sitting tenant was all very well, but it was only an umbrella, and could never be a real roof to the land question. The Chief Secretary asked them to include future tenants in the Bill. A great objection to the machinery of the Measure was that it would increase litigation. A great object of the Act of 1881 was that a certain number of cases should be settled by agreement. 300,000 tenants had had their rents fixed already, and upwards of 100,000 of these would be eligible to come into Court at once. They also invited into Court all future tenants who had held for five years, and the number of such was reckoned by the Chief Secretary at several thousands a year. They also gave an entry into Court to all the men holding pasture farms of between £50 and £200 rent ; men of substance —men paying just as large rents as many of the inhabitants of Belgrave Square, and many of them quite as capable of making a contract with their landlords as the Belgrave Square tenants were. They also gave permission to go into Court to practically all the men who farmed townparks or demesne land. How were they going to deal with this glut in the land market ? If litigation has been slow and costly hitherto, how did they mean to quicken it and make it less costly in the future ? He supposed they would have to appoint 100 or 120 new Commissioners, and he did not believe that number of competent sub-Commissioners was to be found in Ireland. They had to get men who had not only a knowledge of land, but men who were also experienced in the weighing of evidence. He had not the least doubt hon. Members below the gangway would produce a numerous list ; but he was quite certain that nobody would pity the Chief Secretary more than the Chief Secretary himself if he had to appoint 100 or 120 new Commissioners, and he was equally certain that that portion of the Bill had never been brought to the particular notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was another point. Each Committee and each Commission which had sat had agreed in regretting the indefinite nature of the instructions given to the sub-Commissioners. What progress had been made in getting a fair rent defined ? In Ireland no attempt had been made to define fair rent. Did the Government intend to turn 200 or 300 gentlemen loose in Ireland to endeavour by their own means to arrive at a fair rent ? Why could not Parliament set to work to lay down, not in a mathematical way, definite rules for the guidance of the sub-Commissioners ? They were going to put upon two or three hundred gentlemen, some of whom must necessarily be novices, a duty the High Court of Parliament would not undertake. One of the best of them, a tenant's man, a man, at least, who showed no favour to the landlord, told the Committee it was ridiculous to expect him to value a farm on the same principles as the man who valued the next farm. No two men valued in the same way. In the early days, there was one sure standard to guide the sub-Commissioners—the standard of the competition value. But that had been destroyed, and the only thing set up in its place to guide the sub-Commissioners was what the Chief Secretary had called "the special circumstances," which was a phrase of a highly speculative character. As to the mode of hearing applications to have fair rents fixed, there was to be no improvement on the machinery provided by the Act of 1880, which had led to an enormous consumption of landlords and tenants' money in litigation as well as of the money of the nation. At present there were two processes—a hearing before the sub-Commission and an Appeal to the Chief Commission. But as if those processes were not sufficiently costly, the Chief Secretary now proposed that the

Chief Commissioner should send down two valuers to the farm, and that there should be a sub-Commission of four. But if the sub-Commissioners were not unanimous, there must be a resort again to the High Court. The object to aim at was to make the machinery more rapid and less costly. He would therefore suggest to the Chief Secretary whether it would not be better to have simply two valuers and an appeal from them to the Chief Commissioner, with a penalty of costs to be enforced against the appellant if he failed to prove his case. Such a process would be less troublesome and less costly in the long run, and would bring the landlord and tenant closer together. There was one most important subject which should be in the Bill, but was not in it. The Bill was silent in regard to those provisions of the Act of 1880 which pressed hardly, though they were not intended to press hardly on the landlord. There was the question of improvements in connection with English-managed estates. He might be told "*De minimis non curat lex*," for there were so few of them.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Where are they?

*MR. BRODRICK said, the Leconfield estate was one and the Fitzwilliam estate another. Lord Leconfield had lost every sixpence of his expenditure, amounting to £100,000, in thirty years, for the rents had been for years below the level of 1852, when the expenditure began. If it had been the case of a tenant the House would have heard of it every month, but being only the case of a landlord no attempt was made to meet it in the Bill. It was just the same in regard to the question of deterioration, which was another question seriously affecting the interests of the landlords. Not one word was said by the Chief Secretary on that important point, and there was no provision in the Bill to charge anything against a tenant who left his farm in a dilapidated condition. There were plenty of cases of tenants in the south and west of Ireland who had allowed their farms absolutely to run out; who sold their interest for three or four years' purchase, and went to America on the money. There was no provision in the Bill to put a lien on such tenant; but to the new tenant was left the responsibility of bringing the land back to a good condition again. The only words in the Bill dealing with the subject made it impossible to put the real value on such a farm. The sub-Commissioners were bound to assess the land at what a solvent tenant could afford to pay for it, and if the farm were greatly deteriorated a solvent tenant could obviously afford to pay less in the condition in which they found it. If the tenant had improved the land, then they reduced the rent payable to the landlords; but if on the other hand, the tenant had neglected the farm, and so greatly reduced the value of the soil, there was no means whatever of compensating the landlord for such deterioration. Clause 5, if passed in its present form, would perpetrate a monstrous injustice, for it not only restricted the landlord to everything down to the prairie value, but it carried on the most undesirable system that could be set on foot in regard to Irish land—namely, that of putting the worst proportions of an estate on a level with the rest of the property. On the question of the town parks he regretted that they had not been able to call their evidence, because he believed they could have changed the view of the Chief Secretary as well as that of hon. Members on the Committee. But the Chief Secretary was in the position of the reviewer commended by Sydney Smith for his impartiality, who never read a book he was going to review. The right hon. Gentleman, in a similar way, showed his impartiality, for he had not heard the evidence on the matter on which he was going to legislate. The question of town parks was a most important one. It was obvious that if a man got agricultural land just outside a town, where there was a demand for accommodation land, at an agricultural rent of £1 or 30s. per acre, when on the occasion of a fair or market he could get £1 per night for the use of the field, and his tenant-right would be worth £30 or £40, that they were transferring to the tenant a value in the land which did not really belong to him. There was a demand for land outside towns for public purposes; but look at the position in which the landlords of such land were placed by this Bill. He would give an instance within his knowledge. A man held a farm at an agricultural rent just outside a town which was spreading. The holding had never been treated as a town park, the tenant professed to be unable to pay the rent fixed, and he certainly had spent no money on improvements. It so happened, however, that his land was the only land available for the purpose of a fair green, which was required, and yet he asked £25 per acre, or £250 for 10 acres, for giving up the tenant-right of land, the rent of which, he alleged, he could not pay. An arbitrator decided that the tenant-right was worth £200, and the landlord had actually to pay this sum as a gift to the tenant, who had expended nothing on improvements. What was the use of talking of tramways and light railways for the smaller towns if such a practice as this were to be perpetuated? The moment they required land for any public purpose near a town they would not only have to pay the landlord for his property in the soil, but would have to give a large sum to the tenant for his tenant-right, although he might have spent nothing on improvements. He agreed that if there were genuine cases in which land, not accommodation land, was treated as such to prevent the tenant getting a fair rent fixed, a stop should be put to such a practice, but the limit drawn by the Bill was both artificial and absurd, and would fail in its operation. Now could they not hope, before going into Committee, that the right hon. Gentleman, if he could not reconsider his contentious proposals, would consider how far he would meet the Opposition on the non-contentious proposals? Could they not have some clause, for example, to provide for deteriorations? Could they not have some reconsideration of procedure which, at all events, would prevent the cost of litigation? And, above all, would not the Chief Secretary reconsider the right of pre-emption, without which the rent must ultimately be eaten up in the tenant-right? He knew of cases on honest and good estates in which the rents had been reduced 20, 30, 40, and even 50 per cent. in the beginning of the year, and where the tenant-right was sold for between 20 and 30 years' purchase before the end of the year. He would like to see a tenant put to the price at which the goodwill should be sold. He did not know of any arrangement in any other walk of life in which a man might expect to get more than double the value of his improvements when he proceeded to sell. The language which the Chief Secretary had used in reference to Irish landlords was not calculated, in his opinion, to enhance the good feeling with which Debates in this House ought to be conducted, but he would appeal to the House also to consider the enormous change which had taken place since 1881 in the position of landlords and tenants. In 1881 the cry constantly was that all the power and property of the country was in the hands of the less numerous class. But all that was changed. Power had now been transferred into the hands of the more numerous class, and it would not be too much to say that by successive Acts of Parliament more than one-third of the property had been transferred also. The cause of the tenants was represented in this House by 80 or 90 gentlemen, many of them of great ability, who urged everything that could be said on behalf of the tenants. The cause of the landlords, on the other hand, had to be set forth by a few gentlemen—not, he thought, ten in all—who were connected in any way with Irish land. There was no class of individuals so numerous and possessing so large a stake in the country who had so small a representation in this House as the Irish landlords. He submitted that that transference of power transposed the duty of this House. This House sat here to administer justice between all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. If they chose to do it, the Government could, by their majority, disregard the views and the rights of the class of the Irish landlords. They could even carry this Bill if they remained indifferent to argument and impervious to criticism. That was not the way in which the business of this House had been conducted in the past. The Chief Secretary would find that even in Ireland bad principles would not in the long run tell, and, depend upon it, the unsound principles embodied in this Bill would ultimately find him out if he proceeded to perpetuate them in an Act. If they were to disintegrate the existing system, the Government should constitute a fresh one which would have some elements of soundness in it. It was not desirable to pass a measure which must drive all capital out of the country. At a time when good feeling could only be promoted by residence it was not desirable to pass a measure which must banish from Ireland nine-tenths of those who now joined in local work there. The Opposition had been taunted with not dividing on the Second Reading of the Bill. They did not divide because there were some points in it which they were willing to concede, and others on which they were not prepared to abandon all hope that the Chief Secretary would meet them. But if the Bill were passed in its present form it would be without their concurrence, and for partisan reasons by partisan votes, and would create evils which had been clearly foreseen.

Mr. DUNBAR BARTON (Mid Armagh) reminded the party to which he belonged that there were about 100,000 tenant-farmers in Ireland who supported the Unionist cause. These farmers looked to their party to give a fair consideration to those provisions of the Bill in which they were interested, and if that party was not going to divide on the Second Reading it could take no wiser course. The effect of that course in the province of Ulster would be to lead a large number of the tenant farmers to support their Members in trying to do justice to those landlords who had shown themselves willing to do justice to the tenants. He firmly believed that the tenants desired no injustice to the landlords, and that the points in the Bill of which the landlords were most afraid were not the points the tenants most desired. The cause of these tenants had been prejudiced more than anything else by the wild words of some Members below the Gangway, who went about Ireland saying that this Bill was to be a "scorcher" and a death-blow to Irish landlordism. Nothing was more calculated to raise the fears or arouse the opposition of every fair-minded man in the country than language like that. The farmers of Ulster did not desire anything in the nature of a "scorcher;" they did not wish to strike a death-blow at Irish landlordism. What they wanted was, to clear up the doubts that had arisen in connection with the Land Acts, and to remove technicalities that had crept into them. In many respects the Bill dealt with these matters, and in so far as it did he sympathised with it. He was glad to hear the Chief Secretary distinctly indicate that he was willing to go in the direction of compromise. The Bill could never pass without compromise. Any sensible man must realise that. The tenant farmer of Ulster realised it, and the declaration of the Chief Secretary was an encouragement to him. But he regretted that the Chief Secretary had levelled taunts at the Irish landlords. That was not the spirit in which the Member for Midlothian had introduced the Bill of 1881, when he asked the Irish landlords to make sacrifices. That right hon. Gentleman did not insult the Irish landlords when he was asking them to make those sacrifices. The Chief Secretary seemed to indicate that bad landlords in Ireland were the rule and not the exception.

MR. J. MORLEY: I did not mean to say that at all.

MR. BARTON was glad to have drawn that disclaimer from the right hon. Gentleman. In his belief the landlords of Ireland were good, and compared favourably with landlords in other parts of Great Britain. In his view there never was a Bill which was more essentially a measure of details than this one, and which, therefore, more essentially required discrimination. He defied any hon. Member either to praise or condemn the Bill *in toto*. Lord Salisbury had, on a former occasion, used words which were the description of a Bill of details like this. The noble Marquess said that the Bill contained points—white, gray, and black; things which he admired exceedingly, things which he distrusted, and things which he condemned with his whole heart. He (the speaker) adopted those words upon the present occasion. Some points in this Bill were absolutely non-contentious. For instance, every landlord agreed in wishing that there should be no delay in declaring the status of the tenant at the end of the statutory term. In regard to the forms of procedure dealt with in the Bill the Opposition would be more willing than the Government to deal with that question, and the landlords would be as willing not only to support, but to enlarge, the procedure for decreasing the cost of rent-fixing in Ireland. One point in the Bill not mentioned hitherto in the Debate, was that of sub-letting. This subject had given rise to great discontent among members of his constituency. Tenants did not like being compelled either to evict a sub-tenant or to forfeit their position under the Land Acts. Sub-lettings were, it must be remembered, accomplished facts, and nobody wished to evict these sub-tenants wholesale. He contended that if a farm were substantially within the spirit of the Land Acts, it was not fair that the tenants should be excluded from those Acts. Dealing next with the question of mill holdings, he said that this was a question which excited a great deal of interest in Ulster. Public opinion in the north of Ireland had admitted that cases like these ought to be admitted into the Land Acts, and he did not believe there would be much opposition to their inclusion. Another class of tenants were excluded. Under the Act of 1891 a large number of perpetuity tenants were admitted to the Land Acts, including fee-farm grantees. Under a technicality in the state of the law which existed before 1860 a certain number of those tenants had been excluded from the Act. Legislation was needed to put this omission right, because it was a matter which had excited a great deal of heartburning among those men who were some of the best tenants in Ulster. When there was a complicated system of real property law, it was inevitable that a certain number of consequences should follow, resulting from the application of the general law of the land to a new system. The man who made a settlement created sub-tenancies; then came the tenant for life who created other tenancies, and the remainderman might create another body of tenancies; but, owing to the law of settlement, tenants created by limited owner were excluded. He could not see why here and there a number of tenants should exist differing in no respect from their neighbours save in this, that the owner who created their tenancy was a limited owner. Small inequalities like this created a great amount of discontent. There were also tenancies created by the mortgagor or the mortgagee in possession, and there was the case where a middleman was evicted for non-payment of rent. With reference to improvements, he said that the general principle ought to be made clear that no tenant should be rented on anything which could properly be called his own improvements. He believed, moreover, that no landlord in Ireland wished to do anything else than recognise this principle. What the landlords were afraid of was that, under the name of improvements and under the disguise of improvements, there might be deductions from rent which were not really deductions for improvements at all. This was not what the tenants of Ulster wanted. What they wanted was that what were really their improvements should receive protection. He agreed entirely with that, but he did not think the Bill carried out that intention in the way they aimed at. With reference to improvement he would also mention that there were certain limitations and exceptions which had been applied to the Act of 1881 which existed in the Act of 1870, and certain of those exceptions ought certainly now to be reconsidered and some of them removed. Then the question of the evicted tenants was another matter which he considered was non-contentious in the form in which it now appeared. The improvements he had enumerated he could cordially support, and they constituted, perhaps, one-half of the Bill; and it was right to remember that there were some of them who, while determined to do no injustice to the landlord, considered that a considerable part of the Bill was open to no objection, and would effect improvements which would strengthen the law. Coming to the second class of objects, there were grave suggestions which aimed at excellent objects—and they were matters which could be fairly dealt with, but not in the way proposed. In the first case there was the shortening of the statutory term from 15 to 10 years. In itself he offered no objection to that. It was said that they could not calculate or foresee rents over 15 years, and that was the main argument for the proposal. But, he complained, if they were going to have litigation all over Ireland every ten years, they ought to accompany that change by some really effective and cheap procedure. He knew that a great many people in Ireland thought that the shortening of the term would be of no more use to the tenant than the landlord unless the procedure was cheapened, and would benefit nobody but the solicitors. Another proposal was that villa-owners and publicans should be dealt with in the same way as millowners. He thought they were sufficiently protected by the law as it stood; he was quite willing to relax it further for the mill-owners, but he would point out that villa-owners were very often richer than landlords. They already had protection, and quite enough of it. With regard to the proposal in respect of demesne land, it was one which might be monstrously unjust in some cases. Under that subsection one gentleman might hire the demesne of another for 22 years, and at the end of the time grab it and sell it to the first comer. He could conceive hardly anything more monstrous. Let them bring agricultural tenants within the policy of the Act, but not people who were better off than the landlords, and who were never intended to benefit. Nationalist Members had found a new-born sympathy as regarded pasture holdings. In 1870 the pasture farmer was spoken of by a Nationalist Member as "a carnivorous monster who devoured the smaller people of the neighbourhood." Judge Bewley recommended that the limit should be raised from £50 to £100, but he (Mr. Barton) thought £200 valuation, £300 rent, was too much pasture farm to come under the Act. Pasture farmers made no improvements, and he was doubtful whether the provisions of the Bill did not go too far. As to tenants who had lost their tenancy under the eviction section of the Act of 1887, but had not lost their holdings, the Leader of the Opposition did not intend, when the eviction notices were issued, to alter the rights of the tenants in the land, and the clause of the Bill dealing with the matter went beyond the mischief at which it aimed, and should be limited strictly to grievances with which many Opposition Members sympathised. The Improvement Clause should be the best clause in the Bill, but in his opinion it was the worst. The Report of the right hon. Gentleman to the Committee was, on the whole, a fair Report, but in the hands of the Committee it grew into a very different and much more extreme document. In the clause relating to improvements provisions had been inserted which did great injustice to the landlords and little good to the tenants. The tenant wanted, above all, the provisions as to improvements put in plain and homely language. The definition of improvements given in the Bill would make confusion worse confounded. The Bill did that which every fair-minded student of the question, from Isaac Butt to Lord Herschell, had always declared ought not to be done—they had assigned to the tenant what was attributable to the inherent capacities of the soil. The clause would not be fair and just unless it embodied the principle of the words of the hon. Member for South Tyrone:—

> "That the Commissioners did not take the capacity of the soil into consideration in fixing the rent; therefore, when the capacity of the soil had been developed by the tenant, the landlord had a claim to share the result."

With reference to the time for improvements, it was understood that the limit of 1850 would be applied outside the Ulster custom. When the right hon. Member for Midlothian was asked, "Why are you favouring the Ulster tenants?" he said:—

> "I am not favouring them; but the Ulster tenants have paid for these things over and over again."

Every report had called attention to frequent clearances in Ireland. There were many evictions when the 40s. freeholders were abolished and also at the time of the Famine. Farms went completely back to landlords, improvements and all. Therefore, there was strong reason why there should be a limit to presumption in point of time. With reference to the objection that statutory tenancies existed at the present time, there was a great deal to be said for it; but, if the question was to be dealt with at all, it ought to be dealt with by some such plan as in 1887. You could not adopt the monstrous plan of all at once, next year, flooding the Irish land courts with 200,000 cases. That would be so extravagant that, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone said, nothing could be worse than the results. He would now deal with some of the omissions of the Bill. As to the omission with reference to procedure, he concurred in what had been said by the hon. Member for Guildford. What was wanted was a cheaper and simpler procedure; and an effort would have to be made to supplement the provisions of the Bill. He regretted that the Bill did not deal in some way with land purchase. If it were said that was not dealt with by the Committee's Report, he replied neither were the evicted tenants. The Government went out of their way to deal with evicted tenants. He knew districts in which tenants wanted to become peasant proprietors, but not because the wanted to get rid of the landlord. Why were these men excluded? Because they were honest, rent-paying tenants, and that made the property so valuable that the Land Purchase Acts did not offer advantages to the tenants. It was most unfortunate that the Government had not, as they easily might have, done something to help honest tenants under the Purchase Acts as well as Plan of Campaign tenants. With a large part of the Bill he substantially sympathised; there were parts in which Amendments might be made; there were other parts which he could not and would not support. If the Bill, by some compromise, were made to help tenants without injuring landlords, it would confer some advantages on the people of Ireland, and he would not grudge the Chief Secretary the opportunity of co-operating with them in making the Bill more acceptable.

Debate adjourned to Thursday.

## LARCENY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

**The ATTORNEY GENERAL** moved the Second Reading of this Bill, explaining that it had come from the Lords, and that its object was to make it illegal knowingly to receive property that had been stolen abroad. In reply to questions, he said that the Bill applied to the United Kingdom, with the exception of Scotland, where the law did not require Amendment.

**Mr. J. ROSS** (Londonderry) said, the Bill had been printed only a day or two and he desired to call attention to some difficulties that it involved.

Second Reading deferred.

## PERJURY BILL.

On the motion for the Second Reading of this Bill,

**The ATTORNEY GENERAL** hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading. An hon. Gentleman had asked him a question about it, and he had stated that anything controversial in it should be removed. He suggested that, being a consolidation Bill, the Bill might be sent to the Statute Law Revision Committee, and afterwards considered in Committee of the whole House.

**Mr. S. T. EVANS** (Mid Glamorgan) said, that on the understanding that the Bill did go to a Committee of the kind suggested by the Attorney General, he hoped the House would allow it to be read a second time.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) observed that there were a number of Gentlemen in the House of Lords who seemed to have nothing to do but to introduce Bills dealing with the criminal law. So far as this Bill was a consolidation Bill he did not offer any objection whatever to it, but in his judgment it created a new offence, and Bills which created new offences ought to emanate from the House which represented the people. The Attorney General had asked the House to send the Bill to the Statute Law Revision Committee. He had sat on that Committee for three or four years, and a more unsuitable Committee to which to refer a Bill he did not know The most hideous blunders had been committed in that Committee.

**The Marquess of CARMARTHEN** (Lambeth, Brixton) wished to know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman was speaking to the Bill?

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** said, he was speaking to the proposal of the Attorney General to refer the Bill to the Statute Law Revision Committee. He was sorry if the references he had made to the House of Lords did not meet with the approval of the noble Lord. If the Attorney General would say that he had applied his mind to this Bill as a craftsman he would offer no further opposition to it; but he did not think that a Bill of this kind ought to be allowed to pass unless the Law Officer of the day was ready to give to the House of Commons an assurance, on his authority as a Minister, that he had himself gone into the Bill and could inform the House of its contents.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that he had explained on a former occasion that, inasmuch as this Bill attempted the codification of about 150 Statutes, it could not be affirmed that it was purely and simply a consolidation Bill. It was for the purpose of making it a purely consolidation Bill that he proposed to refer it to the Statute Law Revision Committee and to withdraw from it anything that was considered controversial. He hoped that the hon. and learned Member would be satisfied with this explanation.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that after the assurance which the hon. and learned Gentleman had given he should withdraw his objection.

Bill read 2°.

## COURTS OF LAW FEES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

The House went into Committee on this Bill.

(In the Committee.)

On Clause 1,

SIR H. E. MAXWELL (Wigtownshire) asked for an explanation of the object of the Bill.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross) said, the Bill was intended to give the Judges of the Supreme Court in Scotland power to regulate the fees payable by suitors in the courts. The Bill was really a departmental Bill, and had been prepared in communication with the Treasury and in the interest of suitors.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported without amendments, and read 3°.

*Mr. T. M. Healy.*

## TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) (No. 2) [REDEMPTION].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Proposed,—That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.—*(Sir John Hibbert.)*

MR. W. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield) said, that the Bill which it was proposed to introduce was a Bill to relieve the Treasury and Grand Juries in Ireland of certain liabilities. The relief, he supposed, was to be given at somebody's expense, presumably at the expense of the Company shareholders. The change was to be effected with the consent of the Treasury, the Company, and the Grand Jury. He thought that the words "with the consent of the Company" ought to be clearly explained to mean that there must be a certain majority of the Shareholders in favour of the change, and he ventured to suggest that it should be a two-thirds majority.

SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, that if the hon. Member would draw attention to the point in Committee on the Bill, he should be glad to consider it.

Resolution agreed to, and reported.

House adjourned at a Quarter after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, 3rd April 1895.*

The House met at Twenty minutes past Twelve o'clock.

### EDUCATION (SCIENCE AND ART).

Copy presented, — of Forty-second Annual Report of the Department of Science and Art, being that for the year 1894 (with Supplement) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### DRAFTING OF BILLS.

Lords Message (1st April) communicating the following Resolution—namely :—

> "That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider in what manner such inconvenience as arises from legislation by reference in Acts of Parliament to prior enactments can best be avoided,"

considered.

Resolved, That this House doth concur with the Lords in the said Resolution.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

### ELECTIONS (SECOND BALLOT AND RETURNING OFFICERS EXPENSES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday 15th May, read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### STEAM ENGINES (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

**Mr. W. ALLAN** (Gateshead) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said the promoters had agreed to delete a great portion of it. The Bill was an old measure, having been before the House for seven or eight years, and his own conviction was that the Bill as it stood had been overladen with too many clauses. The measure had, therefore, been simplified so as to meet with as little opposition as possible, and so as to obtain the sanction of the President of the Board of Trade. The portions of the Bill which had been deleted were those referring to agricultural engines, to railways, and to steamships. The Bill was now confined principally to land engines—engines in mines, mills, and other factories. As thus modified, the measure was not antagonistic to any interest or any class; neither would it injure in any degree those who used steam or engines. The Bill was merely a continuation of the principle laid down by the Board of Trade in 1862. In that year the Board of Trade passed a measure which required that all engineers on steamships should have certificates; and the promoters of this Bill wished to extend that principle to land engines. He cited the opinion of Board of Trade assessors called in to examine as to the cause of boiler explosions on land. He mentioned two cases, one at Congleton and another at Wigan, and the opinion of the Board of Trade assessors was that the explosions had been caused simply because the men in charge of the boilers and machinery were incompetent. The Bill allowed competent men, willing to pass a certain examination, opportunity to train themselves in the elementary knowledge or principle which governed the steam engine and the working of the Boiler. The Board of Trade Report stated that since the Boiler Explosions Act was passed in 1882, there had been 721 boiler explosions. The persons killed numbered 337, and the injured 721; and for the year ending June 30, 1894, he found that there were 104 explosions. The causes assigned by the Board of Trade for the explosions were first, deterioration, corrosion, or defective safety valves, The second cause was ignorance or incompetence, and their defective designs and miscellaneous matters. In one year there were 104 explosions, but, unfortunately, he had not the number of deaths caused by those explosions. [An hon. Member: "Twenty-five."] He hoped the House was convinced of the necessity of something being done in the matter. He mentioned a case, tried at Petty Sessions, where a lad aged 13 had been put in charge of a boiler. What did the lad do? The lad jammed down the safety valve of the boiler. The Chairman asked him, did he not know how to discharge his duties, and the lad replied there were no rules laid down.

> "The Chairman: Had no one instructed you? The lad: No. The Chairman: Didn't you know it was a dangerous thing to do to screw down the safety valve? The lad said, no."

An explosion took place. He had no desire to take up the time of the House, but he would fain hope that the President of the Board of Trade would see his way to help with that Measure, that it was a duty incumbent upon him to take the matter up and put an end to the existing state of things. What he wanted was to ensure to those who went down into the mines and into mills that the men in charge of the boilers and winding-up machinery knew their duty. Many cases had come to the knowledge of the Board of Trade where men were hauled over the pulley, damaged, and killed. Many cases also had arisen where explosions had taken place simply for the want of the merest elementary knowledge, such as the supply of water to a boiler. Many cases had arisen where a little tampering with the safety valves produced disastrous consequences. If a man had a certificate of competency, his superiors would be bound to listen to him. He was asking for nothing but what the progress of the nation demanded. They could no longer afford to have their engines and boilers looked after by men who knew nothing about them, and the President of the Board of Trade was practical enough to know what they wanted. They had reduced the Bill to a mere shell, and he hoped the President of the Board of Trade would raise no opposition to the Second Reading. He would, then, leave the matter to be dealt with by the President of the Board of Trade. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Second Reading of the Bill.

Mr. C. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck), in seconding the Motion, said, no one who had listened to the temperate language of his hon. Friend would be disposed to think that the principle of the Bill involved an industrial revolution. In too many cases life was wantonly sacrificed through the appointment of careless and incompetent workmen to take charge of dangerous machinery and steam boilers. The necessity for this additional protection had been again and again admitted by the authorities of the Board of Trade. They might be told that the evidence was probably more in favour of additional inspection, rather than in favour of the appointment of qualified persons to take charge of the machinery. He was not one of those who were opposed to the appointment of additional inspectors, and no doubt, if the Treasury could see its way to make such appointments to meet the requirements of the case, very much might be done by more regular and efficient inspection of boilers to prevent the ever-recurring disasters which took place. Their contention was, that the provisions laid down in the Bill would tend, without any material increase in the cost to the ratepayers, to materially reduce the loss of life from these causes, because a competent man would be able, from practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge, to foresee defects in the machinery and boilers, and would be able, in consequence, to give notice to his employers and have them remedied before the actual disaster took place. It was true that the Board of Trade Returns showed that the loss of life from boiler explosions was due largely to this want of inspection, but he thought it would be admitted that there had been an increasing mortality arising from the appointment of incompetent and unskilful attendants to take charge of boilers and steam engines. If this were removed they would reduce to a minimum the chance of loss of life. He instanced the case of Mr. Vincent, a Board of Trade Inspector, who, in 1889, he thought, investigated the cause of an explosion which took place in Cornwall. The Inspector reported that he attributed the explosion in a great measure to the class of men employed as enginemen, and the multifarious duties which they had to attend to. Mr. Vincent went on to say that, in his opinion, men in charge of engines, especially where numbers of lives were intrusted to their care, should be forced to pass an examination before some competent Board, and have certificates granted to them before being allowed to take charge. That was the contention of the supporters of the Bill. The principle of the Bill was no new one, it was embodied in the Merchant Shipping Act of 1862; and, on the authority of the Board of Trade, the loss of life in the mercantile marine had been considerably reduced since it had been made compulsory for the engines of every steamship to be in charge of a thoroughly competent person. The colonies had also adopted the same principle with very beneficial results. The Mines Regulations Act in Australia provided for the institution of a Board of Examiners empowered to examine persons desirous of qualifying themselves as engine drivers, and to grant certificates of competency. In different States and in many of the large cities of America there was a law that persons holding appointments such as were dealt with in this Bill must pass an examination and hold a certificate. The provisions of the Bill were rather more drastic than those in force in New York, but if the House assented to the principle, the details of the Bill could easily be modified in Committee. There would be no indisposition on the part of the promoters to accede readily to any reasonable amendment of the details of the Bill. Some objection had been made to the provision for graduated certificates. The object in providing for first class, second class, and service certificates was to avoid as far as possible any unnecessary friction, and the hardship which might be imposed on a number of men who were now in charge of engines and boilers, and who had discharged their duties for some time with satisfaction to all concerned. To men who had had a certain amount of experience it was proposed to grant service certificates; but it was almost too much to expect such men to be able at once to qualify themselves for a first-class certificate. To make the task easier, and to encourage them in it, the intermediate second-class certificate was therefore provided. But this provision, again, might be modified in Committee. He would frankly admit that, as far as locomotive engines were concerned, he did not believe that the case was so strong as the promoters of the Bill were led to believe at the time when it was framed. Their inquiries had been extensive, and they all tended to show that the Bill was weaker in this respect than in others. Hence the promoters were quite willing to omit that portion of the Bill, provided that the essential principle which applied to boiler attendants and colliery engineers was assented to. The Board of Trade Return issued in 1891 on the working of the Boiler Explosions Act demonstrated the nature of this Bill. From that Return it appeared that in the case of a boiler explosion in Cornwall in 1890 the owner was blamed for neglect and careless management, and was ordered to pay a fine of £80 and costs: and there were three other similar cases where the owners were heavily fined. It might be some protection to inflict heavy penalties for negligence and mismanagement, but the object of the Bill was to prevent the disasters from occurring, and the facts were sufficient to justify the House in giving the Bill a Second Reading.

SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.), in moving "That this Bill be read a second time this day six months," said, that it was as typical an instance of grandmotherly legislation as had been presented to the House for a long time. If it became law, there would soon be a proposal that cooks should be required to pass an examination as having kitchen boilers in their charge. Only two cases of accidents from incompetency had been adduced in support of the Bill. Everyone who had practical acquaintance with the making of boilers know that accidents did not happen from the incompetency of the person in charge, but from his neglect. No amount of examination would discover whether a man would or would not neglect his work; all it proved was that a man was competent to pass an examination. He would give the House an example of how these examination tests worked. As a colliery owner, he had had for many years an underground manager who had earned and well deserved his confidence, because he had never had any accident to the men under his charge. When the Coal Mines Regulation Act passed, this man could not obtain a certificate, because, whilst he was a most competent manager of a pit, he was unable to read or write. He understood the work of a mine far better than one who was versed in the merely theoretical part, and in order to retain such a valuable servant in his employ, he obtained the services of a man who was certificated as the nominal manager, keeping his old manager, however, in his position. It was the imperative duty of employers to put in charge of their engines men who were competent to do the work, and who were sober and attentive to their duties. It was impossible for the Board of Trade to ascertain whether men possessed these qualifications, and all they would be able to say in regard to them would be that they were competent to pass an examination. He submitted, therefore, that this Bill would be a most mischievous Bill, which would take away the responsibility from those persons on whom it ought properly to rest, namely, the employers, and place it on the broad back of the Board of Trade.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) was surprised that so little had been said by the Mover and Seconder in support of the Bill. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading, mentioned a very interesting and a wholly improper case on the part of an employer, where apparently a mere boy was left in charge of an engine. Nobody could defend such a case; but what he submitted was, that hard cases made bad law, and the House ought not to legislate because up and down the country they might occasionally come across cases of this character. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Bill, seemed more to grapple with the facts of the case, but his reference to public statistics did not justify the conclusions he desired the House to draw from them. He had himself examined the statistics, and he came to a different conclusion to that drawn by the hon. Member. In 1870 a Select Committee of the House came to the conclusion that there were 100,000 boilers in England, exclusive of locomotive, domestic, and marine, and about 75 deaths and 50 explosions. But a return issued up to the end of June of last year, showed that for ten years the explosions were on an average 76, the deaths 33, and the injured 72. When they considered the enormous increase of population, and of machinery of every kind in every department of manufacture and trade, he thought the House might fairly conclude that these figures showed there was less cause than ever for a Bill such as this. Comparing the cases of deaths and injured in 1893 and 1894 with those for 1882 and 1883, he found that last year they only amounted to 78, as against 68 ten years ago, and as he had said, the deaths for the last ten years had only averaged 33. Therefore, while the population had enormously increased, and the risks of accidents, judging by the increased use of machinery, had probably quadrupled, the real reasons for introducing the Bill had distinctly diminished. There was another interesting fact. There were 104 boiler explosions last year, but out of these 22 took place in churches and chapels during four days apparently of hard frost. How far, he asked, would such cases be affected by the Bill? He was there, however, not so much to go over all the trades affected by the Bill as specially to refer to that clause relating to the use of donkey engines on vessels when lying in port.

Mr. W. ALLAN: That is withdrawn. In moving the Second Reading I said that all in connection with ships had been entirely deleted from the Bill.

Mr. LAWRENCE intimated that such being the case he would not make any further observations.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) remarked, that the hon. Member who had last addressed the House had endeavoured to minimise the importance of this Bill, on the ground that accidents were fewer now as compared with the number of boilers in use, than they were previously. But he submitted that if by the passage of this Bill they could save one life in the country, they ought to pass the Second Reading stage that afternoon, and from the facts already presented it was certain that this Bill would tend to reduce the loss of life and damage, and injury to limb. The hon. Member for West Wolverhampton objected to the Bill, on the ground, first of all, that a man might be a practical and competent man, but still not to be able to pass the written examination which would be held under the direction of the Board of Trade. What the Bill provided was, that there should be a proper examination, and that examination need not necessarily be of a theoretical, but it could be of a practical, character. The hon. Member also said it was a mischievous Bill, which removed responsibility from employers and agents and placed it on the Board of Trade. But an agent was not worth his salt who did not satisfy himself, so far as was possible, of the competency of the men he employed;

whilst, again, it would be a useful advantage to an employer if he were only able to employ those who were properly certified. He supported the Bill—not because he had any desire or intent to restrict to any particular trade union those who should be employed in charge of boilers. He had no desire in the present depressed condition of trade that it should be in any way hampered. Employers at the present time were put to enormous expense in connection with their boilers, but what was the use of their taking every possible precaution to avoid explosions by constant renewals and repairs if they had got incompetent men to manage their boilers? If the Bill passed, it would secure a competent class of workmen, and thereby save much risk and injury to life and limb. He believed the Bill would also induce men to become skilled artisans wherever machinery was employed in connection with steam power, and it would not only benefit the working-classes themselves, but would be an indirect advantage to the employer for whom they worked. On these grounds he heartily supported the principle of the Bill.

Mr. E. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) observed that they had heard from the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill that practically he intended to take out every one of the most objectionable words and clauses of the Bill. Of course it was difficult to see how that would affect the various trades until they had the Bill in its deleted form before them. As far as he understood the hon. Member for Gateshead, the Bill now would only apply to mills, mines, and cranes, and large machinery of that kind, whereas, as it was originally drawn, it would have referred to donkey engines, and all engines under five-horse power as well as those above. That made a material alteration in the Bill. It would have been perfectly monstrous to have applied this Bill in its original shape to agriculture, for it would have prevented a great number of skilled agricultural labourers from doing the work they now performed in an able and conscientious manner, and would have driven them to seek employment in the towns—a process which was already going on too fast. As it stood, with the deletion, the Bill would be restricted to a very few trades indeed. There was only one suggestion he should like to make, and it was this—if the Bill passed that afternoon it should not be sent to a Grand Committee. Whilst a Grand Committee was a good tribunal, and had done useful work in the past in relation to Government Bills of a non-controversial character, he contended that for Private Bills of this character it was not so suitable a tribunal as a Select Committee, where the whole matter could be dealt with in a much more thorough manner than was practicable before a Grand Committee. He hoped, therefore, if this stage of the Bill were passed, it would then be sent to a Select Committee.

Mr. H. SETON-KARR (St. Helens) said, he had great pleasure in supporting the Bill, especially as it had been materially simplified since its Introduction. It seemed to him that the arguments brought forward in opposition to the measure were those which had always been urged against Factory Legislation. In supporting the Bill he did not wish to convey any reproach on employers, or to imply that they employed incompetent men to manage large and important industries. But they desired to have it clearly laid down by legislation that only competent, certificated men should be in charge of certain engines. Such a measure would add to the safety of the workmen, and, from that point of view, ought to receive the support of employers, whose desire must be to promote good relations between themselves and their *employés.* Anyone who had gone down a coal-mine must have come to the conclusion that it was of the highest importance to have thoroughly competent men in charge of the winding engines. Hundreds of men went down coal-mines daily, and their lives depended entirely on the foresight, skill, and knowledge of the man in charge of the winding engine. The House, therefore, could not go wrong in passing a measure which provided an additional safeguard. It might be urged as an objection to the Bill that it would give the men a greater advantage over their employers in the case of a strike, because the number of certificated men would be limited. But that argument would not hold water, because, after all, a strike depended on the relations between the men and their employers. If a bad feeling were engendered, a strike would sooner or later take place, no matter what legislation was passed. On the other hand no man desired to quarrel with his bread and butter, and if good relations prevailed between the employers and the men, he could not see how the passing of this Bill would give the men an extra inducement to strike. This and other points of detail might well be considered by a Select Committee, with the view of providing against any such contingencies that might arise.

MR. MARK OLDROYD (Dewsbury) expressed his determination to support the Second Reading of the Bill. He took exception to the statement of the right hon. Member for Grimsby with regard to the history of the Bills that had during the present Session been referred to the Grand Committee. With regard to the Bills referred to the Grand Committee on Trade he could say that they were discussed satisfactorily and in a business-like way. He did not believe any better discussion of the provisions of this Bill could be secured than by referring it to one of the Grand Committees. Hon. Members who had opposed the Bill had sought to minimise the necessity for it. But although they had shown by the figures which they had quoted that there was a diminution in the number of fatalities from boiler explosions they had not proved that there was no necessity for the Bill. If the prevention of one disaster could be secured by the Bill, it would be well worth their while to pass it. He was very glad to find that under this Bill measures were taken for the purpose of maintaining in their present position men who had practical experience in the working of engines and boilers. It would have been a very great hardship if men, because of their inability to pass a theoretical examination, should have been ousted from their present position. He had no doubt that many of these men would be stimulated by the passing of the measure to perfect themselves in their knowledge of engines and boilers, and to study the theoretical matters connected with their industry. There had, no doubt, been a diminution in the number of boiler explosions, but that he believed had arisen from the fact that the users of boilers had found the practical necessity of insuring their boilers. By the process of inspection that went on in connection with that insurance, flaws and defects were found out at a much earlier stage than formerly, and thus a great many accidents were prevented. The employment of qualified men to manage these boilers would furnish an additional element of safety, not only to the users of boilers, but also to the public, and he therefore believed that the greatest possible advantage would arise from the passing of the Bill.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, that before this very moderate Bill passed with practical unanimity to a Select Committee, he wished to make one or two observations upon it, especially in answer to the remarks of the hon. Member for West Wolverhampton (Sir A. Hickman). The hon. Member had urged that accidents more frequently occurred from neglect than from incompetence, but it was a difficult thing to define where incompetence ended and neglect began. He was sorry that the hon. Member should have taken the line he did. In his opinion the Bill would not restrict the freedom of employment in any respect; if he thought that it would, he would oppose it. It was because he believed that every boiler-tender could rise to the requirements of this Bill that he would vote for it, and he ventured to express a hope that the hon. Member would withdraw his opposition. The hon. and learned Member for Wilts showed his lack of knowledge of engineering and boiler construction when he said that in spite of increased inspection, and in spite of increased supervision, the number of boiler explosions had increased; forgetting that that was a strong argument in favour of the Bill, and that in the period which he quoted there had been an enormous revolution in boiler construction. The fact that, in spite of all the improvements in construction and supervision which had taken place during the past year or so, the Board of Trade should have to report that in 1894 there were more boiler explosions than there had been in any of the ten preceding years, was a strong argument that the Bill was necessary. Speaking as an engineer who had seen the disadvantages of boilers being tended by incompetent men, particularly in agricultural districts, he was of opinion that what was wanted to avoid accidents was, not unduly to increase the amount of inspection, but to get a better form of inspection which was to be found in the vigilant, educated mind of the men themselves, who, after all, often knew more of what was wanted to insure safety than the boiler inspectors, who too often made a hasty and perfunctory inspection. The real, daily, minute inspection of the man in charge of a boiler, and who might be made by the Bill to feel a sense of responsibility towards his employer and fellow-workmen, was the best safeguard of all. By making a man rather proud of his calling would be encouraging the best form of inspection, and the constant tap here and overhauling there would be the best means of avoiding explosions. Turning to the supporters of the Bill, he regretted to find that they had now eliminated three fruitful fields of boiler explosions. He agreed with the exclusion of railway locomotives on regular railways, but a distinction must be drawn between them and the smaller locomotives, such as were used by contractors on smaller works, where the engines were frequently in charge of very incompetent people, and were in such a bad state of construction that he was surprised at the Board of Trade not having put on a special inspector to prevent the recurrence of explosions in such cases. The intelligent driver and fireman of a regular railway locomotive had practically nothing to do with the state of the boiler, as the engine went into the railway shops, where competent and skilled engineers and inspectors subjected the engines to weekly examinations. He ventured, however, to express a hope that, even now, the smaller classes of locomotive engine might be included in the Bill. Anyone who had worked in lime pits, clay holes, or reclamation works would know that often when the engine tender was ill, a mere navvy was put on to take his place. Within the last ten days he himself had seen a pulsometer pump with the valve knocked off, and a navvy who was in charge of it had taken the nearest broken piece of a wooden shovel, had tapered it up at one end, and had driven it in to take the place of a proper cock, while there was a pressure of steam at the time of 60lb. to the square inch. The hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. Allan), in his anxiety to please everybody—a very dangerous practice, both in and out of Parliament—had excluded shipping from the Bill. He did not object to that course having been taken in relation to large ships, where the engineers were always certificated; but in regard to the subsidiary branches of shipping—such, for instance, as tugs, river vessels, and small steam trawlers, and fishing vessels—he hoped it was not too late to urge that the Committee should be allowed to deal with the boilers in them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Grimsby (Mr. Heneage), in his desire to benefit the farmers, even to the extent of allowing them to blow their labourers to pieces, had expressed satisfaction that the hon. Member for Gateshead had consented to exclude agricultural machinery from the operation of the Bill. But in most cases it was not the farmer who owned these machines. In nine cases out of ten, he hired them, and had them brought on to his farm when he happened to want them for threshing or other purposes. Often more than one engine was so hired, and one competent man only sent with them, who worked one of the machines himself, whilst the actual working of the others was intrusted to Tom, Dick, or Harry, who probably were not strong enough to hoe or do other work on the land, but were considered intelligent and wise enough to be intrusted with the care of agricultural machinery.

Mr. E. HENEAGE interposing explained that the hon. Member had rather misunderstood what he said. The remarks which he made in his speech related to engines belonging to farmers worked by skilled agricultural labourers who were perfectly competent to do their work, but who would be thrown out of employment if the Bill operated upon agricultural machinery.

Mr. BURNS remarked that if the right hon. Gentleman were conversant with these matters he would know that the men who looked after these engines had been agricultural labourers, and that so far from the Bill operating to throw out of employment the skilled agricultural labourers in question, it would stimulate them to apply themselves to obtain the certificate. He would ask which it was most economical and reasonable to do—to pass a Bill to make a man pass the necessary standard of efficiency, or to throw upon the farmer, in this case, the personal responsibility of having killed someone, and the financial liability of having to pay a very heavy fine in addition to losing a valuable man whom it had taken probably 10 to 15 years to train. He regretted that agricultural engines should be excluded, and that shipping, so far as tugs and other river craft were concerned, had not been kept in the Bill; but, in spite of these exemptions, he trusted the President of the Board of Trade would view this modest measure with sympathy, that he would allow it to go to a Select Committee, and that in the light of the practical unanimity with which the Bill had been supported, he would do everything in his power to reduce, through its provisions, that butcher's bill of industry which too frequently was increased by incompetent men being ignorantly employed.

MR. T. H. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he desired to add one word to the chorus of approval with which the provisions of this Bill had been received. Like the Member for St. Helens, he had had the opportunity of going down into various pits, and he thought it must be a matter of great anxiety to the men working in those pits if they had any doubt as to the qualifications of the persons employed in working one of the engines by means of which the cages were worked in which the men were lowered down into and brought up from the pits. There was one point in the speech of the hon. Member for Battersea which he thought he might be able to clear up from his practical experience. That was as to the working of engines upon farms. He understood that the Member for Gateshead had eliminated the agricultural question, so far as regarded implements, from this Bill, and he certainly agreed that that was desirable. They were not in possession of the proposals by which the hon. Member intended to carry out his intentions, and he thought it would have been a convenience if it had been possible to have had the Bill reprinted before the discussion took place. The hon. Member for Battersea seemed to think that agricultural implements ought not to have been excluded, and he quoted some cases in which the boilers of engines on farms had been improperly handled. No doubt cases of that kind might occur, but, from his experience north of the Tweed, he did not think it was generally so. Engines, especially where they were portable engines used for threshing, were always in charge of men employed by the owners. They were invariably skilled men, and the work was always satisfactorily carried out. Where there were engines on a farm they were almost always worked under the direct superintendence of the farmer himself. A farmer who had a fixed engine on his farm was rather a big man. He was, as a rule, educated and thoroughly skilled, and in such cases they employed men who worked under their direct superintendence. It seemed to him that to ask such a farmer to hold a certificate would be a rather unnecessary proceeding, and he thought the hon. Member for Battersea would agree that in such cases this would be a very unnecessary provision. He quite agreed with the principle, and, as the clause dealing with agricultural machinery had been taken out of the Bill, he should give it his support.

MR. A. B. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said, he came to the House with the intention of opposing the Bill, as he believed that in the form in which it was printed it would be one of the most harassing and embarrassing pieces of legislation ever proposed in that House. He understood, however, that the hon. Member who introduced the measure proposed to confine its operations to mines and factories, and, that being so, his feeling with regard to the Bill had materially changed. He thought the better way of approaching this subject would have been to have brought boilers and machinery under the Factory Acts. He believed that explosions arose far more from want of inspection of boilers or engines than from the incompetence of the men in charge of them. There ought to be every care to have competent men in charge of the boilers; but the result they desired would not be attained unless there was a periodical examination of the boilers. He did not agree that the granting of certificates to the men in charge of machinery would secure that the machinery, and particularly the boilers, would be maintained in satisfactory order. There was no assurance that the man who was in charge of the boiler would have any knowledge of its internal conditions, and all the danger which might be inherent in it would be unobserved by the man who held the certificate. He would rather have seen these provisions for safety enacted under the Factory and Workshops Act, rather than this granting of certificates to the men in charge, for he believed there would be a greater security given to the public. This was a technical Bill, and it would be impossible to discuss its details on the floor of the House, and, therefore, it was necessary it should go to a Select Committee. If the Bill had extended to the hundreds and thousands of small machines that were used all over the country it would have created a disturbance of labour amounting almost to a revolution, but, limited as it was, and being referred to a Select Committee, it would have his support.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, he thought the hon. Mover and Seconder of this Bill had stated their case not only with great clearness, but with great fairness and moderation. They had also exercised, he thought, on the whole, a wise discretion in removing from the Bill those particular classes of boilers the inclusion of which would have raised, no doubt, very serious opposition. He could not help, to some extent, sympathising with what was said by the hon. Member for Battersea; still, knowing the difficulties which attended the progress of a private Member's Bill in this House, and the number of obstacles which were thrown in its way in its different stages by those who had, or conceived they had, any interest in opposing it, he thought their discretion had been a wise one, and he hoped the result of that discretion might be that the Bill would now have a smooth progress through the rest of its stages. He was well aware of the interest which the Bill excited, particularly in mining districts, and he had received not only many representations, but several deputations, on the subject. The remarkable unanimity with which the House had received the Bill showed, too, that hon. Members had themselves been the recipients of communications from their constituents upon the subject, and were aware that the feeling with which the Bill was regarded was widespread and deeply felt. The only objections that had been raised had come from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton and from the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Liverpool. He did not deny that the objections of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton appeared to possess some amount of force. As regarded statistics, it was certainly true that the record of these Acts showed that comparatively few accidents had arisen from incompetence as distinguished from neglect, but of course the general classification of accidents was sometimes lumped together, and, as was said by the hon. Member for Battersea, the limits of incompetence and neglect were very difficult to define. There could be no doubt also that the more competent the men were in knowledge and practice the better safeguard there was, because that became neglect in the man with knowledge which would not be neglect in the case of a less competent man. He thought, therefore, that anything that raised the standard of knowledge had a considerable tendency to raise the standard of safety. The Member for Wolverhampton also dwelt on the danger which might arise from making the employers rely on the certificates of competence rather than upon the pains they took themselves in selecting the best man, and he said this would even tend to relieve the employers to a certain extent of responsibility. Of course that was true in a sense. Those were arguments which had been used against nearly all the changes they had made in the direction of protective legislation; he did not deny that there was some force in them, but those who had followed the course of this legislation during the last 50 years would admit that those arguments had been found to be of somewhat less practical moment than had been expected. On the whole, the evils arising from this protective or grandmotherly legislation, as it was sometimes called, had been very much smaller than had been expected. Perhaps the power ought to be more in the hands of the local authorities than the central; but, be that as it might, the intervention of the community had done a great deal of good in the way of securing life and property throughout the country. He was very far from desiring to add to the functions of the Board of Trade, but, at the same time, if the House came to the conclusion that the examination of persons for this kind of work ought to be added to the functions of the Board, which already dealt with other classes of boilers, they would do their best to carry it out with as little friction and with as much economy as possible. Having given due weight to the arguments of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, he confessed he thought the balance of opinion and argument in the House was strongly in favour of their giving a Second Reading to this Bill. Whatever they could do to make life and limb safe it was clearly their duty to do. He was also much pleased by the argument that by giving these certificates of competence to persons in charge of boilers they gave a much better standard to the workmen against careless or reckless employment. A workman who held a certificate would be far better able to discover defects, whenever these accidents occurred, in the condition of the boiler. He thought these defects were generally overlooked now because the man in charge of the boiler had not sufficient knowledge. That appeared to him to be a strong argument for the Bill, and the institution of examinations would help to stimulate everyone to make himself competent. As to the procedure which the House should adopt, although this Bill had frequently been brought in, it had never been so limited, but limited as it was it raised a great many questions of detail. He thought that the best course would be to consent in the first instance to send it to a Select Committee, where it could be carefully examined with regard to the application of its particular provisions to particular trades. He did not see why, after having gone through a Select Committee, it might not then go to a Grand Committee so as to facilitate its progress. If the Bill did go to a Grand Committee instead of taking its chance for a time in a Committee of the House, perhaps it would have a better chance of passing into law this Session. He hoped the Mover and Seconder would show the same conciliatory disposition.

*MR. C. W. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness), whose opening remarks were addressed to the importance of the Bill, observed that there was no one more competent than the hon. Member for Gateshead to bring in a Bill dealing with engines and steam boilers, and although the Bill might be embarrassing in some of its details, yet the importance of the subject was such that those details might very well be amended in Committee, and on that ground, and also because a matter affecting the safety of human life should be seriously considered by this House, he was prepared to support the general principle of the Bill. He was pleased to know that the hon. Member had seen fit to withdraw steamships from the scope of the Bill, no doubt because he knew there were already qualified men in charge of the machinery on board sea-going ships. It was quite as necessary that the men in charge of railway locomotives should be duly qualified as it was that the engineers on steamships should be; and he did not see why the one as well as the other should not be called upon to hold qualifying certificates. The operation of the Bill would probably be of great benefit in saving life and preventing injury in small factories where boilers and engines were now in the charge of unqualified men. The fact that such was the case showed the necessity for the introduction of the Bill, and he felt sure that if it was passed it would do good. There ought also to be a practical examination of the condition of boilers and machinery in all workshops and factories. It was said that the clauses relating to examinations and examiners were complicated, and would be costly in operation, but that difficulty might be met by utilising the services of the present examiners of engineers who had to take out certificates for service on sea-going vessels. It was not necessary to set up another body of examiners. The present examiners for engineers' certificates were thoroughly qualified, and probably sufficient in number to conduct these new examinations. They were principally located in seaports; and if on that or any other account more were required, it would not be difficult to add to their number, while it would cost less to utilise them and their services than to create new examiners for this purpose. He was glad the President of the Board of Trade supported the Bill, and hoped that, whatever Committee it went to, it would pass this Session. After the expression of opinion in its favour on this side of the House, he trusted the Amendment would be withdrawn.

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark N.E.) was glad to know that no argument was necessary to secure for the Bill the support of the President of the Board of Trade. The mining industry in his own constituency afforded a strong illustration of the necessity for a Bill of this kind. In the mines of Lanarkshire work had to be done under peculiar conditions, involving great responsibility. The pits were very much deeper than others; the number of men employed in them was larger; and the responsibility thrown on those in charge of engines and boilers was proportionately greater. The hours the men had to work increased the necessity for making sure that they were properly qualified. They worked on an average 12 hours a day; the shifts were sometimes divided into 10 and 14 hours; and this went on for 365 days a year, without relief on Sundays or holidays. When the change was made from night shift to day shift, each man worked for 24 hours, and sometimes more; and the absence of a mate might require a man to remain at his post for 36 hours. These men had the responsibility of winding up hundreds of men. Their attention was on the strain every moment, and yet there was no security under the present law that properly-qualified and experienced men were employed. Their attention was not limited to winding-up, because they had a certain charge of boilers, and they were liable to be called away to attend them. He knew for certain that serious accidents had been attributed to the employment of inexperienced and incompetent men. It might be said that the hours ought to be shorter, and he was entirely of that opinion; but years, perhaps, would pass before they could be shortened by legislation. He would be pleased if the Bill was sent to a Grand Committee at first, because that would be more likely to facilitate the passage of it this session.

Sir A. HICKMAN said, after what had fallen from the President of the Board of Trade, he desired to withdraw the Amendment.

*Sir E. HARLAND (Belfast N.) said, he hoped the House would not seriously think of reading the Bill a second time. Practical experience led him to say that if there was any department of industry which did not require special legislation it was this. There had been more fatal accidents in the operations and working of steam engines and sets of boilers, of enormous power, than in the working of small-powered engines and boilers. He should place next in liability to accident boilers in kitchens, of which lamentable explosions had occurred during the winter; and he should place lowest and last the very class of boilers and engines which were to be brought under this Bill. One would imagine there were no safety valves. Then, power was often so distributed, that if it could be used only by engineers having certificates, a tremendous tax would be put upon industry. To show how absurdly this Bill had been drafted, he would point out that it made no reference to steam-hammers. They were a very important power in the works of this country. The steam which drove them was derived generally from a set of boilers used for the whole establishment, and was not, therefore, under the control of the engine-driver, who might be hundreds of feet from the boilers. It was absurd, therefore, to bring him under the necessity of an examination. He had often come across the most intelligent and valuable workmen who could not sign their own names, and he could hardly conceive any practical man designing a Bill which would require that something should be driven into the heads of such men merely for the purpose of passing an examination to be all forgotten in a month.

Mr. ALLAN: Provision is made for such men as the hon. Member is now speaking about. Such men would not require certificates of competency. They would get certificates of service.

*Sir E. HARLAND said, he was altogether against these diplomas. Lads and men might be found to read and write very well and do a little arithmetic, but that did not enable them to manage engines any better. The idea seemed to be to bring the rising generation of mechanics under the control of a certain class who wanted to rule the roast. Such a Bill as this would, he was certain, have the effect of seriously injuring the industries of this country; and he looked upon it as not only unnecessary, but anything but encouraging, to youths who, starting with a donkey engine, rose gradually by steps until they ultimately became thoroughly well-trained engine drivers. He was very sorry indeed that so practical a man as the Member for Gateshead should have promoted such a Bill, and he sincerely hoped that the House would not seriously consider the Second Reading.

MR. WARNER (Somersetshire, N.) said, it struck him that there was rather an omission from the Bill. It did not include men in charge of oil, gas, and electric engines. Such engines were coming into use to a large extent, and were quite as dangerous as steam engines.

MR. G. W. PALMER (Reading) said, he had much sympathy with the remarks of the hon. Member for Belfast. He was very doubtful as to the policy of taking any responsibility off the shoulders of managers and owners of large works, and, so far as he was able to understand, the object of this Bill, its effect would be that, inasmuch as this certificate could not be refused to any workman, any man who had obtained it might very fairly be put in command of a large engine or boiler. If in that way an accident occurred, a very large amount of responsibility which now attached to employers might be removed. Perhaps he was not thoroughly conversant with the Bill, but, as far as he understood it at present, it would be his duty to vote against the Second Reading.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read 2°.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I move, Sir, that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion agreed to.

## CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.

*MR. W. HAYES FISHER (Fulham), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, he was very glad to have the opportunity of inviting not only Churchmen on both sides of the House, but Nonconformists also, who had on a recent occasion expressed a friendly feeling for good Church work, to assist him in passing this Bill, which was of a very moderate character, but which was required for the purpose of removing certain grievances which existed in connection with the selection of persons to fill benefices. The first part of the Bill was designed to prevent, as far as possible, unfit persons being instituted by lay persons who had the patronage; and the second part, to facilitate the removal by a bishop of those who, from one cause or another, had proved themselves incapable of discharging their high and responsible duties. It was not the Bill that was presented to the House last year. It did not deal with the transfer of the right of patronage. There were two ways of stopping the institution of improper people into livings. The first method would be by limiting the right of patrons to transfer their patronage. With that matter it was not proposed to deal. It would be dealt with by a Bill to be introduced by the Archbishop of Canterbury in another place. The second method was to be found in the power of the Bishops to refuse to institute improper presentees, and with that power this Bill did deal. It was considered that these powers ought to be clearly defined, and, therefore, the Bill proposed to define accurately, and possibly to enlarge to some extent, the powers of the Bishops to refuse institution to improper presentees. The only novelty in the Bill was that it gave to the parishioners a right to lodge objections to presentees. The first two clauses defined accurately the power which Bishops had to refuse to institute the presentees of lay patrons until they were satisfied that the presentee was a fit and proper person to discharge the office. The procedure in future, if the Bill became law, would be this. The lay patron would send down the usual written instrument informing the Bishop that he had appointed, so far as he could, A. B. to the vacant living, and humbly requesting the Bishop to institute him. The Bishop would thereupon require from the presentee a statutory declaration as to all the offices and benefices he might have enjoyed or occupied since his ordination as a deacon. He would also require letters-testimonial from three beneficed clergymen, countersigned by the Bishop of the diocese in which those clergymen held livings. The Bishop would then send a written notice to the Churchwardens of the parish, informing them that he had been desired to institute A. B. to the benefice, and the Churchwardens would in the usual way give notice to the parishioners. During the month which followed any parishioner would have the right to represent in writing to the Bishop that he considered A. B. an unfit and improper person to be instituted. The Bishop would then give the presentee notice that such an objection had been made, and give him a reasonable opportunity of being heard. If the Bishop then should satisfy himself that a presentee was unfitted for the discharge of the pastoral duty of the benefice to which he had been presented "by reason of any circumstance, not being a question of doctrine or ritual," which might be adduced by any parishioner, the Bishop, if he was of opinion, after having given to such presentee a reasonable opportunity of being heard, that the institution would on such ground be injurious to the interests of the parish, might refuse to institute the presentee. This power of presentation was, he thought, a very proper power to give to parishioners, and Nonconformists, he believed, would approve it. He was completely opposed to the idea that a congregation should be able to choose their minister, and he did not believe that the laity of the Church of England desired so large a power as that. He held, however, that parishioners should at least have the right to lodge objections againt the institution of an unfit and improper person, and that when such objections were tenable the Bishop ought to refuse to admit that person to the benefice. The Bishop, if he should refuse, would have to give notice both to the patron and the presentee, and the latter, having obtained in writing from the Bishop the grounds for his refusal, would have a right of appeal to the Archbishop of the province, whose decision of the matter would be final. These provisions did not go very much further than the existing canon law. But the powers conferred by the canon law were not vigorously enforced by the Bishops, for though that law was binding *proprio vigore* upon the Bishops themselves, it was not equally binding upon the laity. So many objections could be raised to the present procedure that the Bishops too often shrunk nervously from refusing to institute unfit persons. His desire was to transfer the power which the Bishops had at present from the shadowy region of the canon law to the concrete region of a statutory enactment. The words "by reason of any circumstance, not being a question of doctrine or ritual," had been adopted by the promoters of the measure because the Grand Committee on Law which considered the Bill of 1894 appeared to approve a general definition of that kind. He thought it better not to define too accurately the many grounds on which a bishop might very properly refuse to institute the presentee of a lay patron. He held himself that a bishop would be justified in refusing to institute a presentee if it so happened that the church was a very big church, and that the presentee had a very small voice. If the presentee should be disqualified by some natural defect from discharging adequately the duties of the office to be entrusted to him, that would, in his opinion, constitute sufficient ground for a refusal to institute ; but details of that kind were for consideration in Committe. He now came to the second part of the Bill, which gave the Bishop rather larger powers than he possessed at present for the removal from parishes of thoroughly incompetent persons. There were clauses dealing with sequestration and bankruptcy. On the bankruptcy of an incumbent, where sequestration took place within one year after institution, or where sequestration continued during a whole year, or where there were two sequestrations in two years, the Bishop was to have power to declare the benefice void. This was but a small advance, for under the Pluralities Act of 1838 (1 and 2 Vict., c. 106) power was given to bishops, where there was persistent bankruptcy and insolvency, to declare a benefice void. Certain difficulties, however, with respect to procedure, had arisen under the Pluralities Act, and the promoters of the Bill before the House wished to make it perfectly clear that when a clergyman was hopelessly insolvent, the Bishop should be able to remove him from an office which he could no longer fill with dignity. The next part of the Bill dealt with the continuing mental and bodily infirmities of clergymen. Here, again, what he asked the House to do was to extend the powers already possessed by the Bishop under the Incumbents Resignation Act of 1871. A clergyman could himself put that Act in motion by asking the Bishop to appoint a commission to inquire whether he was not permanently disabled through bodily or mental infirmity from the discharge of the duties of his office. Then, if three out of five commissioners reported that he was disabled, he was entitled to have his resignation accepted, and to have a pension of not less than one-third of his income as incumbent. In this Bill it was proposed that the Bishop should be able to put this machinery in motion as well as the incumbent, and that the provision should be applicable to all incumbents. The Bishop was to have power to issue a commission, under the Resignations Acts of 1871 and 1887, on the representation of any five parishioners that the incumbent of the parish had for three years been incompetent through bodily or mental infirmity. The commission would consist of five persons, and if four of them should find that the incumbent was incompetent, the Bishop would be empowered to accept his resignation and to appoint curates to do his work, a certain portion of the emoluments being allowed to the retiring incumbent as a pension. This could not inflict any hardship upon the clergy. If the powers of lawyers or doctors failed their practice left them, but at present, when a clergyman's powers failed his parishioners could not get rid of him. It was Hobson's choice for them. The interests of the clergy ought not to be considered in preference to the interests of the parishioners in these cases. The position of the clergy in respect of the length of their service was far better than that of officers in the Army and Navy and of Civil servants, who had to retire at the age of sixty-five on a pension, although they might be still quite competent to perform the duties of their posts. Lastly, besides dealing with insolvency and incapacity, this Bill went further—and this was the only portion of the Bill which had not passed through the Grand Committee on Law. The Bill differed, therefore, from the Bill as presented to the House, and which was passed by the Grand Committee on Law last year. This Bill dealt with gross incompetence on the part of incumbents. By Clause 4 power was given to the Bishop, by his own initiation, to require Commissioners —who were the same as those appointed under the Pluralities Act, 1885—to inquire and report as to the adequate performance of ecclesiastical duties of the benefice, as to whether the incumbent was able or willing competently to discharge the cure of souls. If the Commissioners reported in writing to the Bishop that the incumbent was unable or unwilling it would be lawful for the Bishop to inhibit the incumbent from office, and the incumbent would be in the same position as if suspended, and the Bishop would appoint a curate or curates to undertake the duties of the parish, and allot them a certain portion of the income formerly enjoyed by the incumbent inhibited. This was not a great increase on the powers which were found already in the old Pluralities Act. There the Bishop was given power in the case, mainly, of absence from the parish, to appoint Commissioners to inquire whether the ecclesiastical duties were being adequately performed, and if these duties were not adequately performed then to appoint a curate or curates to perform the duties of the benefice which had been neglected by the incumbent to whom they were originally entrusted. The definition of "ecclesiastical duties" was taken from the Pluralities Amendment Act, 1885, supported by the ex-Prime Minister, and which was introduced by the Minister of Education. It included not only the regular and due performance of Divine Service on Sundays and Holy Days, but all such duties as any clergyman holding a benefice was bound to perform or the performance of which he solemnly promised at the time of Ordination. To show that the House was willing to further enlarge the powers of the Bishops and to increase these ecclesiastical duties the House in that Act gave the Bishops in the four Welsh dioceses power to call on the presentee of a lay patron, or any incumbent before he instituted him to perform certain services in the Welsh language. Therefore, in now enlarging the powers of the Bishops, they were at all events following precedents that had been set by the House and agreed to by both Parties in the House. The Bishop after all was primarily responsible for the cure of souls from one end of his diocese to the other; and he contended that the Bishops ought to have greater powers than he possessed at present to insist that those who served under them, and to whom they delegated part of their duties, should be fit and proper persons. That it had been so by custom and law could be proved from the words the Bishops used to use in instituting a presentee: "*Instituo te rectorem talis ecclesciæ cum curâ animarum; et accipe curam tuam et meam.*" He believed it met with the general approval of the House that the Bishop should have larger powers than he possessed at present. In the present case there would be an appeal to the Archbishop before the inhibition took place, and he would vary its terms or say that it should not take place. To some people's minds this Bill might appear to be drastic. To him it seemed to be the most moderate measure that the laity could possibly ask for. He himself would go further in invading the sacred freehold of the clergy. In these days, when all men agreed that property had its duties as well as its rights, he thought it should be especially so regarding Church property. He hoped that this Bill would meet with general acceptance in all parts of the House, and that earnest-minded Nonconformists would take the same attitude on this Bill that they took when a similar Bill came before the House in 1894, and allow it to be read a second time. Whilst they based their opposition to the Church on Disestablishment and Disendowment they surely would not wish her to be left unable to remedy the ills from which she suffered? He did not suggest that there was any general delinquency of duty on the part of the clergy, or that there were many clergymen he regarded as black sheep. He believed they were increasingly few, and that the character and conduct and standard of duty of the clergy never stood higher than it did at this end of the Nineteenth Century. Regarding the matter whether as Churchmen or Nonconformists, clergy or laity, he believed it was in the interests of religion pure and undefiled that some such measure as this should be passed. He hoped the Bill would meet with the general acceptance of the House, and be allowed to be read a second time.

*Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) said, the Bill illustrated the fallaciousness of the statements constantly made in and out of that House in regard to the position of the Established Church. During the recent Debate on the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, and all through the Debates on the Local Government Bill of last year, the Church of England was described simply as one of the denominations, and those who did not belong to it were asked to accord to it the same treatment that the various non-Established communities had received from the State. Within the last few days he had met with a statement which accurately defined the position now taken by so many members of the Church of England. *The Church Review* said:—

> "It cannot be too strongly affirmed, or too often repeated, that the Church of England as a body has no more to do with Parliament than the Roman Catholics or Protestant Dissenters. We all have to come to Parliament when we want anything for ourselves as citizens or when our civil rights are threatened. But the Church needs no authority from Parliament. She only has to go to the Queen when she wants coercive jurisdiction for her canons."

No more to do with Parliament than the members of the various Nonconformist communities! What Nonconformist community ever dreamed of coming to that House to ask for means to prevent the entrance of unsuitable men into the ministry, or to obtain facilities for getting rid of them when they had entered it? There was no religious community in the land, however humble, which would permit that House to exercise any authority or have any voice in such matters. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester, in the course of the Debate on the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, expressed great satisfaction at the discovery of the fact that Parliament had passed 1,400 Statutes regulatirng the affairs of the Church of England—he seemed to be as pleased with the number as a child might be with the number of its toys. But there were Churchmen older and wiser than the noble Lord, who had not been in the habit of regarding legislation for the Church with the same complacency. That estimable nobleman the late Lord Carnarvon, speaking on this subject in 1881, said—

> "None but the most short-sighted will look to legislation as a remedy for our present difficulties. The conditions of Parliament, as now constituted, are incapable of wise and just legislation on Church questions. There is scarcely a line on this subject [Church Discipline and Ritual] in the Statute Book of recent years which would not be better out than in;

> and, whatever our difficulties, and even our contentions, the less we have of Parliamentary interposition the happier we shall be."

Other Churchmen had agreed with the noble Lord in desiring that the Church should henceforth let Parliament severely alone. The late Mr. W. E. Forster summed up the position in 1881, in these words—

> "The Church of England is the only great institution in the world which has to go on almost without the possibility of reform; because it can only be reformed by Parliament, and Parliament cannot effectually reform it."

If an illustration were needed of the incongruity of the existing politico-ecclesiastical arrangements they had it in that day's "Orders of the Day." Thirty Bills were enumerated. One had been disposed of already, relating to steam engines and boilers. The others related to meat, drink, taxation, houses, land, and shipping. There was no incongruity in all these matters being dealt with by the House, because the House had the requisite knowledge and competency. But would any one affirm that the House was competent, late on a Wednesday afternoon, thoroughly to deal with a question so full of difficulties as that to which the Bill now before the House related? The difficulty in regard to this question would not be so great as it admittedly was if the Bill before the House embodied the views of the great mass of Churchmen. The hon. Member had represented that he expressed the views of all who were interested in Church work. He must be strangely ignorant of the mind of some sections of the Church to which he belonged when he made that statement. There was not a name of a single Low Churchman on the back of the Bill. Most of the Members belonged to the High Church party, and within the last 48 hours he had been informed that strong objections were entertained to the Bill by an important section of the Church. When he glanced at the statement of objections which had been circulated his eye fell on certain strong epithets. He found that such epithets were applied to the Bill as "iniquitous," "monstrous," "dangerous," "cruel and oppressive," "an attempt to make Parliament the tool of an aggressive faction." At first sight he thought that these epithets must have some relation to a new Disestablishment Bill, or some other measure devised by wicked Liberationists wishing to injure or to destroy the Church; but, they related to this Bill, and the objections emanated from a section of the Church of England which the hon. Gentleman professed to represent as a whole. They were, indeed, objections of one portion of the Church against the proposals of another portion of the Church, and the House was asked to adjudicate between them. He was disposed to say of this wide difference of opinion that it was a very pretty quarrel as it stood; and, personally, he should have no objection to the continuance of the discussion, provided the discussion were outside the walls of the House. The question was proper enough to be dealt with by Convocation, by Church Congresses, and Diocesan Synods; but it was not a question with which the House of Commons was competent to deal. Among the objections which had been circulated against the Bill, they were told that it completely altered the status of lay patrons and the entire clergy; it was an attempt to outlaw the English clergy and to place them at the absolute mercy of the Bishops. There were certain provisions in the Bill which ought to receive the serious attention of the Law Officers of the Crown. The Bill was denounced because of the greatly increased power it gave to the Bishops. He had observed in recent years, while members of the Church of England, as a whole, professed a very great regard for the Episcopacy in the abstract, they seemed to view it with profound distrust when they looked at it in the concrete. He did not know of any class of public functionaries who were the subject of greater abuse and greater obloquy on the part of some members of the Church of England than those who occupied the Episcopal Bench of that Church. He could not wonder at the laity of the Church expressing such strong views, when he found that an occupant of the Episcopal Bench said pretty much the same things of his brethren. The Bishop of Liverpool, in one of his well-known papers on Church Reform, said:—

> "The power of our Bishops is at present far too autocratic; as things are now I know no one hardly except a Roman Dictator or a Russian Tsar, who is such a thoroughly irresponsible

> autocrat as an English Bishop. No one has such absolute official power as he has, and no one is so entirely non-accountable to anybody but himself. I believe that no mortal man is fit to have such power."

It was, however, to those functionaries that the promoters of the Bill were proposing to give greatly increased power, and to do so in the teeth of the protests from members of their own Church. He was aware of the difficulty which lay at the root of the whole matter. He must admit that greater safeguards were needed in the admission of those whose who desired to assume the ministerial office in the Church, and he must also admit that there should be greater facilities for ridding the Church of ministers who had proved themselves to be unworthy to fill so high and sacred an office; but the difficulty lay in the fact that they had no other authority than that of the Episcopal Bench to attain those desirable ends. That was not the case with the non-established bodies. They were not obliged to have recourse to the courts of law, except in very rare cases, to rid themselves of obnoxious and unsuitable ministers. The hon. Member had attempted to show that the Bill also increased the power of the laity. But the power given to the Bishops was substance; to the laity it was simply shadow. They had the right to make complaints, but no power to enforce them. That fact illustrated afresh the absolute helplessness of the laity of the Church with regard to the appointment and dismissal of their ministers. He thought that this was a very small attempt to deal with a very great evil; an attempt to solve a problem which, if it were not insoluble, would never be solved by such a measure as this. It was an attempt to bolster up a system which was radically unsound; and which could not be logically defended, and, like all such attempts, it must ultimately fail. He sympathised with those godly members of the Church of England who were anxious to cleanse as well as to defend it. He desired that they should possess ample means for removing the deplorable evils of which they complained, but they would never be able to accomplish the reform which they felt to be so needful so long as their Church, as established by law, had to come to Parliament to obtain the needed changes. With regard to Church reforms, there was a passage in the "Greville Memoirs," which was worth quoting:—

> "They [Churchmen] are in the situation of a man who has got an old house in which he can no longer live. Various architects propose this and that alteration—to build a room here and pull down one there—but at last they find that all these alterations will only serve to make the house habitable a little while longer, that the dry rot is in it, and that they had better begin, as they will be obliged to end, by pulling it down and building a new one."

Happily, there was no dry rot in the Church of England, and there was no necessity for pulling down that great institution. The evil lay elsewhere. It was to be found in the machinery by which the Church was upheld by the State, and when that machinery was abandoned and the Church stood free and untrammelled, it would become a purified, because a liberated Church.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said, it was difficult to understand the motives which had led the hon. Member to address the House. He had expressed the belief that the Church of England was not a rotten institution, that it had life and vigour in it, and that the clergy had found in their duties a scope for increasing usefulness. Why, then, did the hon. Member offer opposition to a Bill which was designed to remove admitted evils and to provide the members of the Church of England with a voluntary, spontaneous, and self-enjoying remedy? The hon. Member had spoken in tones of ridicule, and had shown that he had no desire to assist the members of the Church of England to obtain a remedy for admitted evils and for the removal of scandals which hindered the sacred work of the clergy. The hon. Member quoted from *The Church Review*, which he presumed took a somewhat high line in maintaining the independence of the Church, and the undesirableness of its control by Parliament. Did the hon. Member make the arguments of *The Church Review* his own? Did he desire that the Church of England, in the enjoyment of its present privileges, should be removed from all control by Parliament? He imagined not, and he believed that the House would recognise that the hon. Member's objections rested upon hostility to a Church Establishment. The inevitable inference to be drawn from the tone of the hon. Member's remarks was, that he would deny to the Church of England as long as it remained an Establishment the opportunity to amend itself. The hon. Gentleman said that the Nonconformists did not come to Parliament for a reform in their constitution or procedure. The reason was, because the members of Nonconformist bodies were bound by the terms of their organisation, and if any member had reason to complain of some action as being contrary to the covenant, recourse was had to the Civil Courts. The Church of England could not go beyond the powers intrusted to it by Parliament for dealing with its internal abuses. The Established Church of Scotland rested on a different footing; it had the amplest powers of dealing with its constitution of any Church in Christendom. Parliament was not prepared to place the Church of England in the same position of freedom, and, therefore, the Church was obliged to come to Parliament for power to establish any reforms. It would be monstrous and most unworthy of those who did not belong to the communion of the Church to refuse to it the means of reforming abuses. The Church had not been in a hurry to come to Parliament; and he trusted that Nonconformists would not grudge the little time which the affairs of the Church required. If the House, by its constitution, were incompetent to deal with Church questions of doctrine and ritual, it might, at least, have confidence in the opinion of the Church at large, when clearly expressed. The hon. Member for the Mansfield Division said that the Church was not unanimous on this question, and quoted a circular of objections to the Bill. The hon. Member might leave Church people to settle this question for themselves, instead of taking a malicious delight in dwelling on such differences as did exist. Objection might well be taken to the tone of some of the remarks in that circular of objections; he regretted that such a document should have emanated from members of the Church at all; and that in this day the freehold rights of the clergyman should be regarded as too sacred to touch. The House could not believe that interference with an unfit or incompetent clergyman was an unjust invasion of his right. No clergyman ought to have a cure of souls unless he were qualified for that position, and performed the duties which he had sworn to fulfil with fidelity and efficiency. It was a crying wrong that the people committed to the charge of an unfit clergyman should have no remedy. As to the rights of the presentee and patron, the second sub-section of the second clause expressly provided for a reference to him. And it could not be said that the Bishop was not the proper authority to exercise jurisdiction under the Bill. To take the lowest view of the Bishop's office, he was the superintending presbyter, charged with the duty of seeing that his co-presbyters did their duty. No more moderate measure had ever been presented to Parliament; the rights of all persons concerned were carefully guarded; and, unless the House declined altogether to give the Church power to reform abuses within itself, it could not refuse so judicious a Bill, framed to do justice to the laity, and to assist the fulfilment of those great ends for which every Church existed.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.) said, that it was one of "life's little ironies" that, having a week ago stood before the House as an opponent of Church Establishments, he should now have to support a Bill for the Better Regulation of an Established Church. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year gave his support to a Bill of the same name, and of a rather similar character, it was not for him to withhold that support from the Second Reading of the Bill before the House. But this Bill was by no means identical with the Bill of last year. The main part of last year's measure related to the prohibition of the sale of livings, and the whole of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech was devoted to that portion of the Bill. All those provisions had disappeared from the present Bill. However, there was a certain amount of matter common to the two Bills, and the support given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to last year's measure therefore covered much of the present Bill. But not only were the provisions about the sale of livings omitted; some new clauses were included providing for the removal of clergymen, on the ground of proved inadequacy and unfitness. That was a point on which the Government reserved perfect freedom of action should the Bill ever reach the Committee stage. The hon. Member for the Mansfield Division quoted from a circular emanating from the Church Association, which was by common consent not the wisest of bodies. The authors of that circular were unnecessarily alarmed by this Bill. What was evidently in their minds was the dread that some Bishop of High Church tendencies should be able to veto the appointment of a clergyman whose views coincided more nearly with those of the Church Association. But the Bill expressly provided that questions of doctrine and ritual should not be regarded by the Bishop, but that he should only take into account unfitness of life and morals and social conduct. There was no ground for this fear on the part of the Church Association. The precedent of the Welsh Bishops was quoted and their power by recent legislation to exclude Clergymen from livings who did not speak Welsh. Such an act of exclusion by a Welsh Bishop had recently been performed in the case of a nominee of Lord Abergavenny, and the state of the law which authorised such a veto would seem to be a precedent for this Bill. There was one point in the Bill which seemed to him to be of great value. A bishop would have the power to inquire into any suspicious gap or hiatus in the ministerial life of any gentleman recommended for preferment in the Church. Recent experience had convinced him that some such provision was desirable. Not long after the present Government was formed a gentleman wrote to, and called upon him, to express a desire to be appointed to a Chancellor's living. The gentleman was of respectable appearance, and, as far as the ordinary sources of information went, of blameless antecedents. But there was a gap of some seven or eight years in his life unaccounted for, and he felt that, before he could recommend the gentleman's name to the Chancellor, he must have information as to how those years had been passed. The gentleman stated that the years had been spent in research; but he said that he was bound to add that this research had led him to a conclusion not generally entertained by clergymen. This conclusion was that concubinage was a state of life sanctioned by God in Holy Scripture; he admitted that he had lived in that state for several years with a lady whom he had subsequently married, and that he felt bound to avow the fact, because he thought that his opinion, and the practice founded on it, might be considered a bar to Church preferment. He left the gentleman to settle the matter with the Chancellor; but it was clear that the present state of the law, by which a clergyman was instituted into a benefice, without any inquiry into such a hiatus being enforceable, might lead to very undesirable results. It was with a view to guarding against the occurrence of such undesirable appointments that he, for his own part, should support the Second Reading of the Bill, reserving to himself and the Members of the Government full liberty to criticise any of its details hereafter.

*Mr. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon) observed, that it was with very great pleasure he had heard the announcement made that the Government were disposed to support the Second Reading of this Bill. He was glad to be able to say he agreed, at any rate, with two of the propositions laid down by the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division. The hon. Member had told them it was a great pity they should have to come to Parliament when the Church required anything to be done in the way of altering any arrangements, and he had also told them that this was a small attempt to remedy the grievances in the Church, which were large. He agreed with the hon. Member, but he did not draw the same deduction. It seemed to him that though it was humiliating to the Church to be obliged to come to Parliament on every occasion, it was the duty of Parliament to do the best it could to remedy the difficulties the Church laboured under. He agreed they were not a fit and proper body to deal with Church matters, but they were the only body, and, therefore, it was their duty to deal with them, and to deal with them in such a way as should be consonant with the feelings of Churchmen. Coming to the Bill itself, it had been said that it gave, and certainly it did give some increased power to the Episcopal Bench. They, as Churchmen, regarded the Bishop as an overseer, who had to look over and attend to the Church, who had to preside over the remainder of the clergy. It was true that their Bishops were not chosen in the way they should like to see them chosen. They resented the nomination of their Bishops by Prime Ministers, or by the Crown on the recommendation of Prime Ministers; but they were their Bishops, and, as Churchmen, they desired to make the best of them. When one reflected upon the men who had been appointed, notwithstanding the mode of appointment, one was almost tempted to say there had been Divine guidance in the matter. When they saw how the appointments were made, it was a marvel to him that they should have men of the kind they had, and who, notwithstanding the manner of their appointment, were a credit to the Church. With the object of the Bill, the prevention of unfit persons holding benefices, all would agree; with the mode of effecting it there might be difference of opinion. He contended that the Bishop was obviously the only person in whose hands the power could be placed of dealing with beneficed clergymen who might be unfit to be instituted, or who, if beneficed, were unfit to remain in the benefices. This Bill, for the first time, gave the parishioner some sort of voice in dealing with the incumbent who, it was proposed, should be placed in the benefice in the parish in which he lived; for such parishioner would be able to represent in writing any ground of unfitness alleged against the minister selected. At the present time the members of the Church of England had no voice whatever in the selection of the minister who was to be placed over them. It might be said that by the proposal in the Bill the parson and the patron might have their rights endangered. He did not think so. First of all, it was not at all probable that the Bishop would be capricious in the matter; and secondly, if he should be capricious or unfair, that unfairness was provided against by an appeal which was given to the

Archbishop. With a view to making that appeal still more satisfactory, when they came to deal with the Bill in Committee he should move that the trial of the appeal should take place in open court. It was brought as a ground of complaint against the Church, that for any action, or for any change it was obliged to come to Parliament. He admitted the necessity and deplored it. But they did not stand alone. Churchmen were not the only body who had had to come to Parliament; he found so lately as 1870 a body called the Primitive Methodist Wesleyan Society of Ireland came to that House and procured an Act of Parliament, in the schedule of which they set forth the doctrines of their Society. Personally, his opinion coincided with that of the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division when he said that Disestablishment was the only cure for the great grievances of the Church; but, meantime, he ventured to ask the House to do what he thought they would feel to be their duty—to do the best they could for the Church of England, and read this Bill a second time.

*MR. R. W. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) remarked, that the hon. Member had called attention to an Act of Parliament which crystallized the doctrinal standards of the Primitive Methodist community in Ireland, but there was a much wider authority of that doctrine, namely, the Methodist Conference Act of 1876, which enabled that great Nonconformist community, ranking in this country only second to the Church of England, to cut asunder its Colonial Churches, and it became necessary to schedule the deed poll which governed the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church. They had been asked by some of the Church members supporting this Bill what Nonconformists could possibly have to do with a measure which, apparently, from their aspect, affected simply the Church of England? At the first sight that might be a reasonable question to put, although it ignored the popular doctrine that, as parishioners, Nonconformists, at present at all events, had as much right as Churchmen to take part in the management of matters concerning the doctrine and teachings of the Church of England. In a vast number of the rural parishes Nonconformists were chiefly concerned not about what went on inside the Church, but in what went on in the national schools in the villages. When they recollected that there were thousands of national schools in the villages of England, where the Church clergyman was practically supreme, they would see that Dissenters were interested in seeing that the clergyman, in a village especially, was a man of great ability, of a good life, and successful in his religious enterprises. They were, therefore, though Nonconformists, to some extent interested in the present Bill, and they were delighted when any attempt was made to secure in connection with the Church the services of an efficient and capable clergyman who could perform the important duties and requirements connected with his office. It was on that ground he spoke in favour of the Church Patronage Bill last year, and he was sorry that what he considered the far more material point of the Bill of this year would not come before them. He would remind the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division that when they had this question threshed out in the Grand Committee on Law, and had to decide whether they were going to clothe the episcopal authority in this country with greater power, the Nonconformist Members were rather surprised to see a distinct cleavage in the Committee—the Members for the Isle of Wight and West Bristol voting on one side, and the Members for Rochester and West Edinburgh on the other. They were somewhat perplexed to know on what side to vote. For his part he was not in doubt, and he voted against the concentration of authority in the hands of ecclesiastical officials.

He did not believe in adding to the power of any ecclesiastics, whether they were Nonconformist or Church ecclesiastics. He would far sooner place the authority in the hands of a joint assembly of clergy and laymen. He had never heard such feeble reasons given for a Bill as had been advanced for this measure. They were told that this Bill added very little to the powers of the Bishops, and were also told that it affected the clergy only in a slight degree. He supposed the first argument was addressed to the nervous people, who were afraid of strengthening ecclesiastical authority and power, while the second was addressed to the still more numerous nervous people—the clergy of the Church, who were afraid that they might be driven out of their quiet livings and have to give an account of their services, and be tested by the practical issue of results. There was another important point. The Bill extends to Wales; and if the Established Church (Wales) Bill became an Act, the question remained how this Bill would have any bearing on the Reformed Church of England in Wales. He hoped the Bill would go to the Standing Committee, and although it seemed a very trifling little Bill, and ought not to receive much assistance either from the lay patrons or old clergy, still it would be the duty of every Nonconformist on the Committee to try and lick it into some sort of practical shape.

*MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) expressed his gratification with the manner in which the Bill had on the whole been received. The Under Secretary of State stated that the Bill did not contain some provisions which were in the Bill last year, and, on the other hand, it contained some things which that Bill did not contain. He frankly admitted that was the case; but if he might reveal ecclesiastical secrets, which hon. Members might have already heard, there was an idea that a Bill embodying some of the provisions, the absence of which had been noted, would be introduced in another place, and might come down to this House hereafter. It was thought better that the different parts of the subject should be treated separately, and that the disciplinary provisions should be considered in this measure. Two opposite terrors seemed to be aroused in connection with this measure. One terror was, that it would put too much power into the hands of the Bishops, and that by means of this power clergymen who did not hold certain theological views would be subjected to persecution. In answer to that, he need only say that whatever the differences between High and Low Churchmen might be, he never yet heard there was any difference among them on questions of morality. It would be an insult to the Evangelical party to say that any Bishop would take injurious action against a clergyman who did not happen to agree with him in theology, and would, therefore, proceed against him on some question of morality. On the other hand hon. Members opposite would like to see a lay tribunal, but Churchmen belonged to a Church which was governed by Bishops, and they trusted their Bishops. It was much more a danger that the Bishops would find themselves so much hedged round by the safeguards of this Bill, supported by a large amount of generous, and, perhaps, too indulgent public opinion, that they would hesitate long before putting those provisions in force. With regard to another matter which had been mentioned, personally he did not care whether a barrister or a magistrate were placed upon the Commission proposed to be appointed under the Bill, but it was thought that, in order to protect the interests of an incriminated clergyman who was to be tried by such a Commission, a barrister of standing, coming, perhaps, from London, and recommended by high authority, would be more likely to be unprejudiced and impartial than a magistrate who might be a neighbour of the clergyman, and possibly prejudiced by rumours he had heard about his incompetence or conduct. He agreed that this was just one of the class of Bills which could best be dealt with by the Standing Committee on Law, and he might mention as a remarkable fact that the parallel Bill came out of the Grand Committee last year a stronger Bill than it went in. He wished to pay that honour to those who had not been supporters of the Bill, that they were willing so to strengthen it.

MR. J. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.) protested against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester (Sir J. Fergusson) complaining against Nonconformits taking part in the Debate on this Bill. If there was one principle recognised in this House more than another, it was the absolute equality of Members of Parliament, as regards taking part in any Debate on any Bill which happened to come before the House.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: I never intended to convey that impression.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN accepted the statement of the hon. Member, but he reminded him that he referred to the action of the hon. Member for Nottingham as a "malicious interference." It had been contended that the Church was free and unfettered, but the introduction of this Bill was conclusive proof that the Church was bound to the State. She found herself unable to effect the very smallest reform without coming to the House of Commons, a secular body, in order to have it done. He had always said that the Church ought to be reformed. There were scores, if not hundreds, of reforms which, as they heard from different bodies in the Church, the Church required; and if they were to legislate to reform the Church the House of Commons would enter upon an unending task. The Church was indeed placed in an ignominious position. One section of the Church, by no means a small one, made an almost piteous appeal to him, a Nonconformist, to save the Church from the hands of hon. Members on the other side of the House, and against the iniquity of the attempt to place clergymen at the absolute mercy of their Bishops. An hon. Gentleman opposite said the Church had absolute confidence in their Bishops, but that did not represent the views of the whole Church. They said:—

> "The centralisation of despotic power, to be wielded in secrecy in the hands of Bishops, is an expedient most dangerous to the clergy and to the welfare of the Established Church."

He therefore found himself, as a Member of Parliament, appealed to by one section of Churchmen to support the Bill, and by another to oppose it. He had no objection to the Church being reformed, but in view of these conflicting elements he held that the House of Commons, constituted as it was to-day. and was ever likely to be, was not the right body to reform it.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W., Bootle) said, he thoroughly agreed with the remarks of the preceding speaker—that the House of Commons was not the proper place in which an important measure of this kind ought to be decided; but it was at present the only tribunal open for the ventilation of the subject, which was of extreme importance. He regretted that on a matter fundamentally affecting the welfare of the Church, he found himself entirely at issue with those with whom, on almost every social and political question, he had for years been in thorough harmony. The object of the measure was to confer upon the Bishops, or overseers, of the Church an additional and practically irresponsible power. Under this Bill, an accusation could be brought forward by an unknown person, who did not declare his identity; that accusation was heard in secret, no opportunity was offered to the accused person of knowing who his accuser was or what he was accused of; and he might be deprived of his means of living and of his status in his profession on the *ipse dixit* of a Church functionary, who was in no way responsible to a Court of Justice for the decision he might give. The foundation of the liberties of the people of this country was, that any accused person should be fairly, honestly, and openly tried by experienced judges; and he wished to know for what reason the clergy were to be excluded from a law which governed their fellow men, and why their privileges and liberties were to be subjected to the irresponsible authority of those who, after all, were merely human? It was supposed that a Bishop, in virtue of his high office, could do no wrong. He had the greatest regard and respect for the Bishops as a body, but they would have to be more than human to be entrusted with such drastic powers as the Bill proposed to confer upon them. If the Bishops must really wield those powers, then the House would have to consider whether some other method, than that now in vogue, of appointing them should not be adopted. The second clause provided that any parishioner might send to the Bishop a representation in writing of his objection to the institution on any ground which entitled the Bishop to refuse to institute. That was an extremely wide power. Nothing was said about the accused being furnished with a copy of the accusation, and there was no provision for the decision of the Bishop being laid before a Court of Law for the purpose of deciding its legality. This drastic power might be used as an engine of oppression by a Bishop against his brother clergyman. A power which could deprive a man of his living, of his status in the profession, of his good name before the world at large, should not be wielded *in camera* either by a Bishop or an Archbishop responsible to no person. And when they had, by this sort of clerical Star Chamber—for he could call it nothing else—utterly ruined and broken down the prospects of an unfortunate man who had fallen into their clutches, there was no human appeal left by which his grievance could be redressed. That was the principle which the House was asked to affirm by this Bill. It was the principle of trampling on the rights of a worthy class of Englishmen whom they all respected, and when the House came to a decision upon it, he hoped they would say that the Bishops, as at present appointed, were not to be entrusted with such powers. He moved that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Mr. T. C. T. WARNER (Somerset, N.) seconded the Amendment. He had no objection, he said, to the House dealing with the Church. So long as the Church was established no one could object to its regulation by the civil power. But his experience had been that the appointments and regulation of Bishops were not always quite as perfect as they might be. He had found over and over again that a Bishop holding particular views had given to a whole district clergymen whose views, while agreeing with his own, differed from those of the people in the district. Unfortunately this Bill, instead of giving more power to the parishioners as a body, only enabled a few of them—and there were one or two discontented people in every parish—to appeal to the Bishop, and the Bishop, had the decision of the case without any reference to the general body of the parishioners. If there had been some provision in the Bill enabling a majority or a large proportion of the parishioners to give their opinion, before the Bishop's decision was carried out, he should have looked upon it as a real reform. There was a provision in the Bill that testimonials should be got from three clergymen, but one knew that testimonials from clergymen were about the least reliable of all testimonials. A clergyman had so many testimonials to give that he very often gave them without careful inquiry. If the Bill gave increased power to the parishioners it would do a great deal of good, but as it merely increased the power of the Bishop's interest effecting any real reform, he believed it would only injure the Church of England.

Mr. A. S. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said, he had not intended to intervene in the Debate, but he thought it was necessary to say a few words in reply to his hon. Friend behind him, who as a Churchman objected to the measure. His hon. Friend's objection was, that the Bill would increase the power of the Bishops. But he absolutely denied that in principle the Bishops' power was increased by the Bill. All it did was so to improve the existing machinery that the Bishops might be able to exercise the powers which they now had in principle in such a way as to be more beneficial to the Church. The Bill gave the Bishop greater power of refusing the institution of an unfit presentee. But the paper circulated by the Church Association distinctly stated that the Bishop might now refuse to institute an unfit presentee. All that the Bill did, therefore, was to give the Bishop a better chance of carrying out the obvious intention of the law. Again, with regard to the inhibiting of clergymen in cases where the Commissioners certified that the work of the parish was not adequately performed, a similar power was given to the Bishops so long ago as 1838; and the very tribunal to which his hon. Friend so strongly objected—the Bishop sitting *in camera*, or an appeal to the Archbishop—was the very tribunal enacted in that particular case. All that they were doing by the Bill was to bring the machinery up to date, and to enable the Bishop to carry out the existing law. Did his hon. Friend distrust the Bishops of the Church? Surely the natural person to carry out the exclusion of the immoral parson was the Bishop. He could not understand any Churchman having this profound distrust of the men at the head of the Church. The only question in this Bill was whether the Bishop should institute a man or not, and in doing so he was not to take into consideration any question of doctrine or ritual.

Mr. WARNER: If a Bishop is biassed in one direction, he will probably appoint a man with a leaning in the same ritualistic direction.

Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN pointed out that if the Bishop refused to institute a man, he had to state reasons in writing for refusal. If his reasons were shown to be reasons of ritual or doctrine, those objections would be unlawful, and his refusal could not stand. Turning to those who were not Churchmen, he would ask them to help Churchmen to effect this small, but very useful, reform. Surely it was a matter for Churchmen to decide whether they chose to come to Parliament or not. If they did not object to come to Parliament on such a matter as this, it was not for the Member for Mansfield or other hon. Members to tell Churchmen what they ought and what they ought not to do. He hoped that the Bill would pass its Second Reading that afternoon, and that it would be referred to a Committee, where its details might be threshed out.

Mr. MacINNES (Northumberland, Hexham) asked, in what Church did not differences exist? The fact that there were those differences was some proof of the vitality of the Church, but from the remarks made by certain hon. Members it was clear that much point would be made of the differences existing amongst Churchmen. He believed that the promoters of this Bill represented a large majority of members of the Church of England; and, just as the opinion of the majority prevailed with Nonconformists, so must the majority in the Church prevail upon the present occasion. They had no course but to come to Parliament to effect this reform, and he hoped that the Second Reading would be carried by a large majority. As to the position of the Bishops, probably he himself differed *toto cœlo* from the views held by many members of the extreme High Church party opposite and outside; but, without entering upon such disputed points, he thought they were all agreed that the Bishops of the Church of England, during the last 40 years, had been men upon whose decisions the whole community would with confidence look, and he believed that this view was shared by Nonconformists also.

*MR. H. J. ROBY (Lancashire, N.E., Eccles) only desired to say a very few words. He felt no hesitation about the Introduction into Parliament of a Bill of this kind, the Church of England being at present the Church of the State, and Parliament having, therefore, a perfect right to deal with it. As to this particular Bill, he was heartily in favour of anything which could be done to insure to the National Church a better appointment of officers. He had been thinking, however, that a refusal by a Bishop to institute a person duly presented to a living by the patron might in practice be extremely prejudicial, and perhaps unjustly so, to the person himself in other walks of life. It would put an open and public slur upon a person, and this ought not, in his opinion, to be done without a proper hearing of the case and without proper security to that person. In some cases, no doubt, it might be proper not to adjudicate upon the matter in a public court, but it would, he suggested, be possible for the Bishop to sit in such cases with assessors—he meant assessors with power to vote; at least two, one a layman, the other a clergyman. Perhaps the Archdeacon or Rural Dean and the Chancellor of the Diocese might sit with the Bishop. In some such way as this a council might easily be formed in which more confidence would be felt than in the unaided judicial power of the Bishop himself. If some assistance were given to the Bishop, and if a proper opportunity were secured for the person in question to be heard, he thought that much good might come from this measure. In any event, however, he was sufficiently convinced that additional power should be given in such cases to make him vote without hesitation for the Second Reading.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.) desired to thank the last speaker for his contribution to the Debate. In his view every possible protection should be given in the case of an institution, and a much wider margin should be allowed to the authorities, whether to the Bishop sitting alone or with assessors as had been suggested. The Member for Eccles had said that it would ruin a man's character to refuse to institute him, but the intention of a patron to present need never become public property. But if the presentation should become matter of common knowledge amongst the parishioners, and the parishioners should write to their Bishop stating their objections to the proposal presented, then, surely, the interests of the parish should take priority over the interests of the individual, though, of course, the interests of the latter should be safeguarded. All these matters were, however, points for a Committee to discuss.

*MR. R. L. EVERETT (Suffolk Woodbridge) congratulated the promoters of the Bill upon the compliment they had paid to the wisdom of Oliver Cromwell in the course he took when he was called to supreme power and sought to use it for the making of England better and more religious. He did not know what was the nature of the committees of Triers he appointed, but he believed they were of local origin, and did not consist of Bishops, and he would recommend the promoters of the Bill to look up the details of Oliver Cromwell's plan in the hope that they might learn something from it in giving the people power over the pulpits of the Established Church so that they might be occupied only by God-fearing men, whose teaching was calculated to promote all that was highest and best.

The House divided :—Ayes 179 ; Noes 118.—(Division List No. 40.)

Bill accordingly read 2°.

*Mr. HAYES FISHER moved that the Bill be referred to the Grand Committee on Law.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked why the Grand Committee on Trade should not be selected ?

Motion agreed to.

## POOR LAW (ELECTORS) AMENDMENT BILL.

*Sir THEODORE FRY (Darlington), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, it was a Bill of only one clause, whose object was simply to prevent the disfranchisement of those men who, under special circumstances entirely beyond their control, were forced to receive outdoor relief and to give their labour in exchange for it. Sometimes owing to a stoppage of work in a great industry, like the coal industry, a very large number of men were in some towns thrown out of employment for a number of weeks, during which time they were obliged to accept relief from Poor Law Guardians. In the town of Middlesbrough-on-Tees in 1892 no fewer than 2,000 men were struck off the register in this way on account of the coal strike in the county of Durham ; in his own town about 450 men last winter were forced to accept temporary relief owing to the stoppage of some large works ; and in Gateshead in 1893 about 350 men had, under similar circumstances, to accept relief. The objects the Bill was to prevent disfranchisement in these occasional cases. The Boards of Guardians in Newcastle, Gateshead, Manchester, Stockport, Saddleworth, and Darlington, had all passed resolutions in favour of this Bill, and the only difficulty which presented itself was the fact that this question would receive some attention from the Committee which was now sitting. He would undertake, however, if the Bill passed the Second Reading, that it should not come before the House again until the Report of that Committee had been presented.

Mr. J. C. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) seconded the Motion on behalf of his own and other constituencies similarly situated in London. The extraordinary severity of the recent winter had turned out of work many thousands of honest, hard-working people, especially in the south-east and east of London. He had known cases of people who had never received parochial relief before, who, when they learnt that this would disfranchise them, had refused to accept the relief they so sorely needed.

Mr. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) did not think this was a subject which could be adequately discussed in the short time at their disposal. It raised very large considerations of public policy, in addition to which, while the Committee on Distress from Want of Employment had this question very prominently before them, it would very seriously embarrass them if the House were to give any decision on the subject now. Under these circumstances, and without going into the merits of the Bill, he hoped the hon. Gentleman in charge of it would not press it to a Second Reading.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said that, although he felt great sympathy with all that fell from the hon. Member for Rotherhithe, it ought to be remembered that those who received outdoor relief would, under the Local Government Act, be electors of the candidates or members of parochial or local councils. Was that fair to the ratepayers and taxpayers ? He thought it was a very dangerous principle. When the Local Government Bill was before the House they were told that no apprehension need be felt in regard to this matter, because the receiving of outdoor relief would be of itself disfranchisement. Now, however, that security was proposed to be done away with. This Bill would interfere with the very foundation of the Poor Law. They were told by the hon. Mover that the cases would be exceptional, but there was no provision for exceptional cases, and the cases were very numerous, as the Member for Rotherhithe had himself stated. Was it fair to the taxpayers that a considerable number of men who received relief should have the power of voting for those who were to dispense the relief, and thus voting for their own relief? The disability, he pointed out, was only temporary. He cited the authority of Miss Octavia Hill to show that the lower classes were very bitter about the administration of outdoor relief, and urged the House not to be too lenient in regard to the matter.

**Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.) said, the Bill was not simply one of detail—it concerned the whole administration of the Poor Law of this country. It had already been stated that this question was receiving the special attention of the Committee upstairs, in addition to which he urged that if they were going to amend the Poor Law, and alter the basis on which it was founded in 1834—a measure which everybody agreed did incalculable good to the poorer classes—they were bound to do it as a whole, and by a comprehensive measure. The present Bill savoured of political popularity. He yielded to no man in sympathy with the poor themselves, but all those who worked amongst the poor agreed that any alteration in the basis of the Poor Law would be a disaster to the poor themselves.

The hon. Member was still speaking at Half-past Five, when the Debate stood adjourned.

## MERCHANDISE MARKS (FILES) BILL.

Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee.

## FARM SERVANTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

## COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

**Sir HENRY JAMES** (Bury, Lancashire) asked that this Bill might be read a second time on the understanding that it be referred to a Select Committee.

*Sir R. Temple.*

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) hoped that the Motion would be agreed to. Every lawyer knew it was most desirable that something should be done in the direction contemplated by the Bill, not only in the interests of justice, but of the masses of the people.

**Mr. H. D. GREENE** (Shrewsbury) said that last week he opposed the Bill, but he desired to support it as long as it was referred to a Select Committee.

Bill then read 2°, and on motion of Sir Henry James, referred to a Select Committee.

## TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) (No. 2) (REDEMPTION).

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883."

Resolution agreed to.

## POST OFFICE ACT (1891) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Strachey, Bill to amend the Post Office Act, 1891.

Bill presented, and read first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 191.]

## LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

Reported; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

## LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (VAUXHALL BRIDGE) BILL.

Reported; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Thursday, 4th April 1895.*

## DRAFTING OF BILLS.

Message from the Commons to acquaint this House that the Commons do concur with their Lordships in the Resolution communicated in their Lordships' message of Friday last—namely : That it is desirable that a Joint Committee of both Houses be appointed to consider in what manner such inconvenience as arises from legislation by reference in Acts of Parliament to prior enactments can best be avoided.

## GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Accounts of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities, and for payments on death, made during the year ended December 31st, 1894.

## GENERAL PRISONS (IRELAND) ACT, 1877.

Order in Council approving of rule made by the General Prisons Board for Ireland, dated March 11th, 1895.

## CHITRAL.

In answer to the Marquess of LANSDOWNE,

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord REAY) said, I can communicate a telegram just received from the Viceroy, dated 3.15 p.m. to-day, which is as follows :—

"Malakand Pass captured yesterday, 3rd April. The pass was very difficult and stoutly held by 3,000, chiefly Mullahs and Sheikhs and their followers, Upper Ranizais, Utman Khels, and Adamzais. Gatherings on Morah and Shahkot Passes had no time to join. Advance was made by our infantry in several columns, and the heights were ultimately carried at the point of the bayonet. Artillery and Maxims co-operated with great success. Enemy lost at least 500, and probably more. Our casualties not yet known fully, but reported as 50 in second brigade alone. First brigade advance to Swat river to-day (4th), and the second follow when pass is fit for camels."

## ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read $2^a$ (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow ; and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

## GRAND JURIES (IRELAND) (No. 2.) BILL.

Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read $3^a$ To-morrow.

## EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL—[H.L.].

Order of the Day for receiving the Report of Amendment read, and discharged.

## EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES (No. 2) BILL—[H.L.].

On Report of Amendment to this Bill,

*LORD MORRIS called attention to what he considered to be an irregularity in the procedure before the Standing Committee. He moved an Amendment on that occasion dealing with the application of the Bill to Ireland. It was put to the Vote, and 12 Peers voted with him and 13 the other way. A noble Lord was present on that occasion who was not a Member of the Standing Committee when the Bill was first called on, though he admitted that if any noble Lord ought to be on such a Committee it was the Peer to whom he referred—the Lord Chief Justice. That noble Lord's vote was counted in the Division, and the clause remained in the Bill. He understood that while the question was under consideration the name of the Lord Chief Justice was added to the Committee. He did not understand by what means this was done, but he thought it was an extraordinary proceeding. The Lord Chief Justice was not a Member of the Standing Committee, and he had no right to vote. But his vote had made a decided change in excepting Ireland from the operation of the general criminal law of the country ; and therefore he objected to the reception of the Report.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (LORD HERSCHELL) said, that while there were two identical Bills dealing with this subject, they were nevertheless perfectly separate. It was incorrect to say that the two Bills had been taken together; they were taken in succession. His noble Friend had objected on principle to the Report of this Bill because of something which had been done on another Bill; but the noble and learned Lord would have an opportunity to restate his objection when the Report connected with the other Bill was moved by his noble and learned Friend, Lord Halsbury.

The EARL OF MORLEY thought that nothing irregular was done before the Standing Committee, and there was no question as to the Standing Orders having been complied with. During the sitting of the Committee he was informed that the Lord Chief Justice desired to serve on the Committee. Lord Kensington and himself, under the Standing Orders, agreed that the noble Lord ought to be placed on the Committee for that occasion. The Standing Order No. 47 distinctly gave power to the Committee of Selection, appointed at the beginning of each Session, to appoint any noble Lord to serve on a Standing Committee. This was constantly being done. It was usually done the day before, but it was not necessary to take action the day before, and there was no compulsion on the Committee of Selection to make any report to the House on the subject.

*LORD MORRIS said he would withdraw his objection.

Report received and agreed to.

## ECCLESIASTICAL TITHE RENT-CHARGE IN IRELAND.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE rose to call attention to the recent action of the Irish Land Commissioners in requiring the payment of ecclesiastical tithe rent-charge at earlier dates than usual; and to move for papers. This question, he said, had been before their Lordships on several occasions; and the particular point to which he wished to refer that evening was mentioned not many days ago by the noble Lord on the front Opposition bench at the close of a conversation begun by Lord Belmore. His noble Friend was not successful in eliciting from Her Majesty's Government any explanation as to the facts to which he then adverted, and as the subject had attracted a good deal of attention in Ireland he had thought it desirable to give their lordships an opportunity to obtain an explanation with regard to it. Their Lordships would no doubt recollect that the Irish Church Act of 1869 contained a provision under which it was open to a landowner to redeem the tithe rent-charge on payment of a sum equal to 22½ years' purchase on the annual instalments. The Act also contained an alternative proposal intended no doubt to meet those cases in which a transaction by out-and-out purchase might not be convenient to those concerned. The alternative was that the rent-charge could be redeemed by a series of annual instalments slightly exceeding the amount of the rent-charge and spread over a period of 52 years. Three years after the passing of the Irish Church Act, in 1872, an Amending Act was passed. That Act contained a number of different provisions, and among them was one stereotyping the ecclesiastical tithe rent-charge at the figure at which it stood on November 1 of the previous year. Their Lordship's would observe that the effect of that provision was to preclude those who were liable for this rent-charge from the right of having its amount revised at intervals of seven years according to the fluctuations in the price of certain agricultural staples. Then they came to the Act of 1887—an Act which amended the Land Act of 1881 and the Land Purchase Act of 1885. In that part of the Act of 1887 which dealt with the question of purchase, it was indicated that the—

> "Land Commission may, if they think expedient, order the redemption of any Crown rent, quit rent, or tithe rent-charge or any apportioned part thereof, at a price to be fixed by the Land Commission."

Their Lordships would observe that, whereas the number of years' purchase laid down in the original Act was 22½ years, the number of years' purchase in the Amending Act was that which might be fixed by the Land Commissioners, he presumed with the concurrence of the Treasury. With regard to the Act of 1872, he observed that it passed through both Houses without any discussion whatever, and, no doubt, judged by the light of the circumstances which were then present, it did seem a very desirable thing that the amount of the rent-charge should be fixed once and for all instead of being variable at intervals; but the result had certainly been rather disadvantageous to the persons liable for this particular payment. He noticed in the recent Report of the Land Commissioners that in the last year 11 perpetuity rents, amounting to £1,419, were reduced in accordance with the prices of corn to £959, a very substantial reduction, and one which the ecclesiastical tithe rent-charge was now no longer liable to. Then, with regard to the terms of commutation, they would recollect that last year Lord Belmore, in a very temperate and carefully-reasoned speech, laid before them certain reasons for believing that there had been a very serious miscalculation in the terms upon which the tithe rent-charge might be redeemed under the Irish Church Act. The noble Earl showed that while the Bill was under discussion the original proposal of the Government had been considerably modified, and that, in consequence, the number of years in which the principal sum, together with interest, was to be extinguished had been overestimated by no less than six years, and that whereas 46 years would have been the proper term to lay down, the term actually laid down was 52 years. Lord Belmore subsequently asked for statistics from Her Majesty's Government with the object of elucidating this point, but, owing to an unfortunate piece of forgetfulness, which was admitted the other day, that information had not yet been provided, and he hoped that the noble Lord who was going to follow him would be able to tell them that it would be laid upon the Table of the House at an early date. But there was a good deal of other evidence which showed that these tithe rent-charges were very considerably overvalued under the Irish Church Act; it was a remarkable thing that on two occasions the Land Commissioners had approached the Treasury and made a specific recommendation that the number of years' purchase should be reduced from 22½ years to 20, and in a recent Report they said:—

> "The facilities afforded by the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, for the apportionment and redemption of quit-rent, tithe rent-charge, and head-rents have enabled sales to be effected in almost all cases discharged of outgoings. While, however, the redemption prices of head-rents are being fixed as provided by the 16th Section of that Act, and the price of lay tithe rent-charge has been fixed by us at 20 years' purchase, we regret to have to report that no effect has as yet been given to the provisions of the 15th Section of that Act for the revision of the prices of either quit-rents or of tithe rent-charge payable to the Land Commission, which have still to be redeemed at the respective rates of 25 years' and 22½ years' purchase."

The effect of the maintenance of this high rate of purchase was that a landlord who was the owner of a lay tithe of £10 a year payable to him out of lands which were being sold, received for that payment at the rate of 20 years' purchase—namely, £200; but if, at the same time, he was selling lands charged with an ecclesiastical tithe of £10, he had to buy that up at 22½ years' purchase—namely, £225, or a difference of no less than 12½ per cent. between the two transactions. In regard to the question of over-valuation, Mr. Morrough O'Brien, one of the Irish Land Commissioners, had recently given evidence before the Royal Commission on the Financial Relations between Great Britain and Ireland to the effect that tithe rent-charges, though a first charge on the land, were difficult to identify, costly to collect, and not easily saleable in the open market, so that, as a rule, they were not worth more than 17 years' purchase; that perpetuity rents were not worth more than 21 years' purchase, and as the Church rents were variable with corn prices, they were not worth as much as ordinary fee farm rents; but that the Church Act had fixed the price of tithe rent-charge at 22½ and perpetuity rents at 25 years' purchase, thus adding £2,779,000 to the then market value of the securities, the artificially swollen value being to the detriment of owners of property subject to those charges. If these contentions had any force in them those who were liable should at least receive from the public department concerned no less consideration than had been extended to them during recent years. The allegation, however, was that the Land Commission, instead of pressing these claims with moderation and forbearance, were at this moment engaged in what was vulgarly called pulling up arrears, greatly to the inconvenience of those who were liable for these payments. Even on the best estates in Ireland, he believed it was the case that rents and tithe rent-charges due in May were paid in November, and those due in November were paid in May; but now the tithe rent-charges due last November had been asked for in February, and further time was peremptorily refused. This attempt to obtain the payment of three half-years' tithe rent-charges within 12 months was, he thought, unwise. Everyone knew that if the landlord were to attempt to obtain payment of the rent out of which the rent-charge was to be met in a similar manner, and asked for three half-years within the 12 months, he would be told he was acting very harshly and running the risk of troubling the public tranquillity. Recent legislation abounded in provisions intended to give every opportunity to embarrassed tenants to obtain from their landlords the utmost indulgence. He believed that at the present time a Bill was before Parliament designed, among other things, still further to increase the difficulty of overtaking arrears of agricultural rents in Ireland. He did not say that the indulgence was unwise, but he contended that in common fairness it would be just to extend to those liable for these rent-charges a few shreds of the consideration extended to those liable for the rent out of which the rent-charge had to be met. That was the whole of his contention. He hoped there was no intention on the part of the Government to depart in any way from the practice which had hitherto governed the procedure of the Department responsible for these matters. He would like to hear whether the cases that had been commented upon in Parliament and the Press were isolated cases, or represented a policy that had been deliberately adopted and sanctioned. If there had been a new departure, he hoped the noble Lord who would reply for the Government would tell the House whether it had been thought necessary to make it; and whether, if there were any papers, and if any instructions had been given under which the Land Commission had taken this action, he would be good enough to lay them on the Table of the House.

Lord RIBBLESDALE said, that as to the papers that were asked for he could not conceive what papers he could lay on the Table unless it was a Return of payments and claims for payments on account of tithe-rent charge in past years. He had no such Return, and he did not think, if he placed such papers on the Table, they would add anything to the explanation which he hoped he would be able to give in answer to the questions of the noble Marquess. He was sure the noble Marquess would be the first to admit that in the remarks he had addressed to the House he had wandered a good deal outside the limits of his question. He himself did not complain in the least of that. But the question asked for information upon the specific action recently taken by the Irish Land Commission with regard to the payment of tithe-rent charge, and he was sure his noble Friend would not expect him to go into the redemption and over-valuation of tithe as affected by the Act of 1869 and the amending Acts since. He would have to say a word in a different connection on the Act of 1869, but not as regarded general legislation as to commutation of tithes, which was not embraced in the noble Marquess's question. Whenever attention was called in the House to the recent action of anybody or anything in Ireland it was generally not in a congratulatory tone. The present case was no exception to the rule. He understood the noble Marquess—and he recognised the most moderate and temperate way in which he put his case—to say that the Irish Land Commissioners were supposed to be showing a want of moderation and forbearance, and not showing the moderation and forbearance which the circumstances surrounding the payment of sums of money owing would warrant them to suppose they would show in the case of Ireland. The noble Marquess also wished to know whether it was the intention of the Government to take a completely new departure and to act in future in a harsh and unreasonable manner towards those who had to pay tithe rent-charges. He also said that if a new departure had been taken it would be only right for the Government to say why such new departure had taken place. He put on one side altogether the idea that in what the Land Commissioners were doing or had done they had acted harshly. They were merely doing what they thought right in view of circumstances which he would explain. It was quite true that the custom for some years had been that the issue of notices for payment of tithe-rent charge due on May 1st did not take place until early in October, and payments due on November 1st were not paid until early in March. The payment of May gale under the old order of things was demanded on May 1st, and the November gale on March 25th. The noble Marquess thought the recent action of the Commissioners pointed to a new order of things. He admitted that a new state of things had come about. The Commissioners, on full consideration, had decided now that the notice for payments of tithe rent-charge should be issued within two months of the half-yearly payment, and that the limit of payments should be the first three months after 1st November and 1st May for the payments then due. While six months' credit was formerly given, now it was only three months. Those who had been accustomed to six months' credit might feel the shortening of the period a little hard, but the persons to whom the money was owing had to be considered as well as the person who had to pay. It might be just as inconvenient for the creditor to give six months' credit as it might be pleasant for the debtor to obtain it. Roughly speaking, the tithe rent-charge amounted to £170,000 a year. That was a large sum, and the Commissioners were bound to pay the interest on the charges imposed by Parliament on the Church Fund on the actual date on which the interest became legally due. The charges which they had to pay to the Church Fund almost absorbed the whole of their receivable income. Consequently, six months' credit had been allowed by those who had to meet their obligations punctually to the day. There was also the difficulty of keeping accounts and having enough money to go on with. That was the reason why the change had been instituted. Previous to the Act of 1869 the tithe rent-charge was paid by incumbents and various ecclesiastical bodies in Ireland, and there was no reason to suppose that long arrears were allowed then. An incumbent probably had a family to bring up, boys to send to school, and the butcher and grocer to pay, and therefore looked well after his tithe, and got it paid pretty punctually. Why should arrears which were not allowed to run on continually in those days be allowed to run on continually now? He did not think the Land Commissioners intended to deal harshly, but it was their duty to require payment of the tithe rent-charge sooner than hitherto, because they had to pay interest and other money they might owe on the day it became due. In conclusion, he would inquire when the memorandum, asked for by Lord Belmore, giving the calculations upon which the commutation of tithe rent-charge was based, would be ready.

Lord ASHBOURNE said, that nothing could be clearer, but, at the same time, more entirely unsatisfactory, than the statement of the noble Lord. The position appeared to be a harsh one, a disagreeable one, and one that was largely indefensible. The Irish landlords and those who had to pay these charges ought not to be made to suffer because Parliament, in its imprudence, had made many charges upon these Irish funds. Over and over again attention had been drawn to the way in which the Church Fund had been charged with millions and half-millions, and it was a wonder that the Fund had not come to an end a long time ago. Each time a demand had been made it had been argued from figures that the Fund was not insolvent, but that, when all its assets were taken into account, it was quite solvent, and if it were wound up at some future time there would be a substantial surplus; but each time the question had become graver and more serious, and had led to the manifestation of more incredulity as to the power of the Fund to bear any further advance. From the statement which the noble Lord had made, apparently by instruction, it might be inferred that it was the Treasury who were really answerable for this new departure, and who had caused the collectors to press for prompt payment in order to enable them to satisfy the claims upon the Irish Church Fund. That was an unfair position in which to place those who were bound to pay these charges. The noble Lord carefully read, apparently from communicated notes, the statement that an order had been made or a direction given. It would be satisfactory if this order or direction could be produced, so as to show the date and the method of this new departure, and in its absence they could understand that it was the Treasury that was responsible for this pressure. He had heard the statement with surprise; he did not expect an answer so painfully frank and disagreeably candid; he rather anticipated a denial of intentional or exceptional pressure, and a promise of inquiry and of adherence to older methods. This was a hard case, and a harsh one. Irish landlords were no more easy in circumstances than were their English and Scotch brethren, and it was hard upon them to ask them to make these payments almost to the hour, whilst at the same time, in Parliament, on platform, and in the Press, they were asked to be generous, forbearing and indulgent in not pressing for their rents—nay, the sentiment was embodied in the language of statutes, for in the Act of 1887 there was a clause empowering a County Court Judge, instead of taking land from a tenant in arrears, to spread the payment of them over a number of instalments. The landlords were thus forbidden to seek for that prompt payment which by this new departure they were themselves required to make. This was harsh and unreasonable. Some agents had received printed forms stating that payment must be made within six days. It was not fair criticism to object to the noble Marquess going outside the bare question on the notice paper, for they must look at the matter as a whole. The 22½ years' purchase adopted in the Church Act having come to be the measure for the purchase of ecclesiastical tithe rent-charge, the calculations on which it was originally based had been asked for and promised, but not supplied. The return was promised last year, and the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, regretted that the matter had been forgotten. It was very unsatisfactory that a return which was promised twice over in Parliament by the Prime Minister had been forgotten—a return which was greatly sought for in order to show how it came about that a heavy payment was exacted from Irish landlords when they desired to buy or redeem ecclesiastical tithe rent-charge. The statement now made left the matter in a position which necessitated further inquiry, and, if necessary, further discussion.

*Lord Ashbourne.*

LORD RIBBLESDALE said, he was sure the noble Marquess would acquit him of having indulged in any criticism in the remarks he made as regarded tithe commutation rent-charge. What he said was not by way of criticism, but it was by way of excusing himself for not being able to go fully into a very different question which the noble Marquess raised. Having said that, he must add that he rather objected to the noble Lord opposite going into a question which he had said he was not prepared to go into, and making use of a specific question by the noble Marquess to convey what he might call a somewhat menacing argument. They were asked to do all sorts of things and to make all sorts of inquiries which were completely outside the original question, and which he took some exception to. The noble Lord opposite had asked him whether he had spoken from his own notes or from what had been supplied to him by some one else. It was quite true that he had in his hands the answer which he did practically make. As to the part he had read, to which the noble Lord attached such super-excellent importance, the words "Treasury minute" were not mentioned at all in the instructions. He did read, from the notes with which he had been supplied, the following passage—

> "The Commissioners, on full consideration, decided that the demands for payment should go out in future within two months of the half-yearly dates upon which tithe rent-charge becomes legally payable, and that the limit for payment should be three months after May 1st and November 1st respectively."

He only read that because the noble Marquess had asked him a perfectly plain question as to whether a new departure had been made.

## COURTS OF LAW FEES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Read 1ª: To be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next.—*(The Lord Chancellor.)* [Nº 65.]

The House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Six o'Clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Thursday, 4th April 1895.*

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The House met shortly after Three of the Clock.

## LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL TRAMWAYS BILL.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) moved :—" That Standing Order 171 be suspended in the case of the London County Tramways Bill, and that the Committee on the Bill have power, if they think fit, to provide in the Bill, notwithstanding the said Standing Order, that the local authority may place and run carriages upon the tramways mentioned in the Bill or any of them, and take and demand tolls and charges in respect thereof."

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) regretted that he had to oppose this instruction because, in the first place, the hon. Gentleman had not consulted the Parliamentary Committee of the County Council, and therefore had no sanction whatever for bringing this matter forward. As it was, the County Council had plenty of work to do. That work had been ineffectively done in the past. They knew that the late Council was very ambitious, and some persons seemed to have an idea that the present County Council was in favour of the policy of the late Council, whereas it was totally opposed to it. As regards these tramways, he believed there was a great future for tramways. He considered that a great many more were required in London, but if the London County Council insisted on running tramways, there would be no companies coming forward to promote tramways. Therefore it seemed to him that this was a totally unnecessary instruction. It would tie up the hands of the Committee. The County Council, no doubt, was still in the hands of the Progressive Members, although they represented a minority of the voters. Through the co-option of the Aldermen they had still a majority, and they secured a majority on all the Committees. Parliament had wisely decided that corporations should not work the tramways unless they failed to get a proper price as a rental for the tram lines, but if they were to pass this Bill they would be proclaiming, far and wide, that it was the view of the House that the London County Council ought to work the tramways themselves. He thought it would be a very great mistake indeed if the London County Council did take upon itself the working of these tramways. The Committees were numerous enough already, and those committees had now more work than they could do efficiently. Then the Instruction would tie the hands of the Committee upstairs, and that he thought would be most unfair and most unwise. The hon. Member who brought forward this motion, had had no instruction to do so from the present Parliamentary Committee of the London County Council. There was a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee last Thursday, but not one word said about this Instruction, and he was surprised the next morning to find this Instruction on the papers of the House, and if it had not been for the hon. Member for Marylebone that Instruction would have been passed. That was the way they were being " jockeyed " by the present London County Council. If this Instruction were passed it would be tantamount to saying that the London County Council were called upon to work these tramways, and by and by they would be enabled to take upon themselves more work than it was doing now. When they had London divided into divisional districts and much of the work that was now being done by the County Council handed over to those authorities, then they might do more work. But at present it was impossible for the members of the County Council, even if they were to attend from early morning to late at night, to fulfil all the duties which now devolved upon them.

Mr. J. STUART said the hon. Member had made an assertion with regard to himself, namely, that he had placed this motion on the paper without authority, which was incorrect. A week ago the question of the propriety of moving this Instruction was brought up before the Parliamentary Committee of the County Council, and by a narrow majority that Committee requested him to place this notice upon the paper of the House. In consequence of that resolution he placed the Motion on the paper, and it was to have been taken on Monday. But after communicating with the hon. Member for Marylebone he thought it would be right and proper that they should have the decision of the new County Council upon the main issue of whether they desired to proceed with the Bill that was at present before the House, or not, before going on with this Motion. That was agreed to, and the hon. Member for Marylebone yesterday brought forward a resolution in the County Council to the effect that the present Bill be abandoned. That resolution was defeated by a majority of 70 to 55. Those were the whole of the circumstances of the case. The Instruction, if it were adopted by the House, would not tie the hands of the Committee upstairs. It was one of those Instructions familiar to the House and was not of a mandatory character. The hon. Member who had just spoken had treated this resolution as if it were a resolution in some way or other obliging, or pledging, the County Council to work the tramways. It was no such thing. If this were carried and the Committee approved, the Bill would give power to the County Council to work the tramways. That was a direct following out of the line in which their Standing Orders and legislation had gone. In 1870 there was a General Tramways Bill introduced which said this:—

> "That nothing in this Act contained shall authorise any Local Authority to work tramways,"

and so on. That Act had been read into the Tramways Acts, and in 1871 a Standing Order of this House was passed which said that no Committee upstairs should authorise any Local Authority to work the tramways. That absolutely prohibitory Standing Order continued for 20 years, but in 1891 there was a modified Standing Order passed whereby a Committee upstairs was empowered to allow the Local Authority to work the tramways, provided it should be unable to let them on terms which might be approved by the Board of Trade. They were asking in the present instance to go a step farther and to remove that restriction about working them only under those terms. And they were doing that, not from any desire of his own or of his friends, to work the London tramways. They were prepared to see what the circumstances brought forth, but they said that their bargain in letting them was, from the business point of view, seriously interfered with by the fact that they had not full power to work them. He appealed to the House as to whether this was not a reasonable thing to grant to the London County Council. They must take their chance whether the County Council did or did not work them after it had the power. The House might be assured that the people of London were well enough able to keep the County Council in order if they were taking any action which they believed detrimental to their own interests. That was well seen by the late County Council elections. There was a reason for moving this suspension of the Standing Order in the interests of London, and there were the cases of other municipalities such as that of Leeds, which were in the same position. Of the London Tramways, 30 miles out of the 100 were established before the General Acts Acts of 1870, or during the year 1870, and under those Acts, the County Council as successor to the Metropolitan Board of Works had the right to purchase and work those 30 miles of tramways. But in respect of the remaining 70 miles, the Council had no power of working. The hon. Member had spoken of the destruction of private enterprise which would result from this proposal. There was no one who held more highly than he did the advantages of individual enterprise, but if such enterprise were damaged, it would be by the fact that the Council already had the power to purchase the tramways, and not by the fact that, having purchased the tramways, they were able to work them. He was confident that, from a business point of view, it was desirable that the Council should have these powers.

Mr. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, East), said that he could quite appreciate that the House did not very much care about the little squabbles of parties at Spring Gardens. [*Ministerial Cries of* "Hear!"] He could also quite appreciate those cheers on the other side of the House, for, lately, the squabbles had been more interesting to the Opposition. As to the proceedings last week in the Parliamentary Committee of the County Council, it was decided that this Motion now before the House should be put down without any reference at all to the Council as a whole. That was carried by a majority of 10 to 9, but the Parliamentary Committee had no power to pledge the Council. The hon. Member said that the Committee had instructions to do their best to get the Bills through which they introduced. He had searched in vain for any such mandate. What he did find was an instruction to the Parliamentary Committee to comply with the Standing Orders of the House of Commons, and yet they were now asking that one of those Standing Orders should be suspended. As to the majority of 15 on the Council, of which the hon. Member had made the most, that was insignificant when it was remembered that the aldermanic vote was much stronger on the Progressive than on the Moderate side. The question before the House was very simple. The County Council brought in a Bill enabling them to work the tramways which they had acquired. Then it was pointed out that the Bill was contrary to the Standing Orders of the House; and the County Council coolly asked the House to suspend the Standing Order, which was passed less than three years ago, and which might be considered, therefore, to embody the most recent deliberations of the House on the subject. The Standing Order provided that the Committee of the House might insert a clause into a Tramway Bill to the effect that if a local authority were unable to demise its tramways on such terms as in the opinion of the Board of Trade would yield the local authority an adequate return, the Board of Trade might give the local authority a licence to work such tramways. That provision ought to satisfy the London County Council, for the President of the Board of Trade was known to be very friendly to the County Council, and would readily accede to the application. It was said that the Council could not find a lessee to pay an adequate rent for the line. That was not surprising. There were a little more than four miles of line which the Council wished to lease for a short term, and those four miles part of a large system of tramways. The hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Stuart) said that the view of the majority of the Council was that of business men on a business matter. His experience of the old Council and of the present majority was that it was by no means composed entirely of business men, but included a great many theorists and faddists and gentlemen who had not the least appreciation of matters of business. The hon. Member also said that the Council only wanted the power of working the tramways, and did not contemplate actually working them. The Council had never shown themselves backward in the past in exercising all the rights which had been given to them; and if the power now asked were once given, they would on the moment try the experiment of working the tramways. He predicted that the results would be most disastrous to the ratepayers of London. They had the experience of one tramway worked by a local authority—the Corporation of Huddersfield; and that was the only example which could be quoted. During the ten years in which the Huddersfield Corporation had worked the tramways there had been a loss of £37,442—a loss which fell upon the ratepayers. Why did not the London County Council follow the example of the Liverpool Corporation, which had expended £240,000 on the laying of tramways, and which received a rental of 10 per cent. on the outlay? That would be a much better plan of dealing with the ratepayers' money than speculating in horses and tramcars. The Moderates had been accused of championing monopolists. He appreciated the new-born zeal of the hon. Member for Shoreditch for private enterprise, but the majority of the County Council had shown in years past a desire to do everything to stifle and choke private enterprise. The Moderates wished to encourage private enterprise, without which what would London or England be? But they believed that in checking the attempt of the majority on the Council in their present endeavour they were acting as the champions of the ratepayers' purse. This municipalisation of everything the County Council could get hold of must tend to an increase of the rates. Why should the Standing Order be suspended? A plain answer could be given. If the House determined to suspend the Order he was satisfied that every local authority in the country would come to the House and say they desired the Order suspended. He did not see why the London County Council should have any different treatment to the great Corporations in the provinces. He asked the House not to part with the restraining power which they had in their hands now and which had been imposed so recently.

Mr. J. W. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that if this were a case of dealing with one tramway company the Standing Order might meet it, but in London there were unfortunately no less than eight tramway companies. While under the Standing Order the County Council might be successful in coming to terms with one or two companies, they might in all probability be at variance with the rest and be unable to deal with the whole tramway system in a satisfactory manner. The London County Council had endeavoured to so arrange their tramway business that the whole or nearly the whole of the system would come into their hands in four or five years' time. The hon. Member for Marylebone posed as the champion of the ratepayers. Let him direct attention to a few figures, which proved that concern for the interest of the ratepayers was rather on the other side. The Council had an offer some time ago for a 21 years' lease of one-third of the London tramway system. They found that, without the assistance of this measure, the best they could get from the tramway companies was something like £60,000 a year in the shape of rental.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE presumed the figure was the hon. Member's own. If it was an adviser's, would he name that adviser?

Mr. J. W. BENN said, that if the hon. Baronet had been a member of the old Council he would not have asked the question. The figures were arrived at after communication with the North Metropolitan Company.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE: One tramway company?

Mr. J. W. BENN said, it had to do with one-third of the tramway system of London and of lines extending some 35 miles. Against the £60,000 rental they found the net earnings of the tramway companies of London at the present time amounted to £210,000. There was thus a balance of £150,000, and what the Council were fighting for was power to drive a fair bargain with the tramway companies, so that the ratepayers of London might get a share of the £150,000.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE asked if anything was calculated for horses and cars and capital?

Mr. J. W. BENN said, that all those things were carefully calculated for in his figures.

Sir J. BLUNDELL MAPLE: Not in the £60,000.

Mr. J. W. BENN said, if the hon. Gentleman would confer with him afterwards he would satisfy him on all points. The matter had been referred to as if it were a fad of the Progressive Party. It was really nothing of the kind. It was the outcome of a like Bill which proceeded from the great Corporations of the kingdom, and was suggested by one of the leading Conservative Members of the London County Council. It was in no sense a Progressive fad. He thought they got at the secret of the matter from the following paragraph in a circular issued by the North Metropolitan Tramways Company to the electors advising them to vote for the Moderate candidates at the recent election:—

> "If such a power were granted, it would seriously diminish the value of your undertaking, and under these circumstances I would strongly urge upon you not only to vote for, but to use your influence on behalf of, the Moderate candidates in this district."

This was a case of "one good turn deserves another." He hoped the Instruction would be agreed to by an overwhelming majority.

*Mr. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) thought the House, and certainly the Opposition, were indebted to the hon. Gentleman for his candour and straightforwardness. The hon. Member had gone into elaborate calculations which, if he accepted in their integrity, which, if he believed them to be as correct as he believed them to be incorrect, proved one thing beyond all question, namely, that the desire of the supporters of the Instruction was that the London County

Council should enter into possession of the tramways for the purpose of working them. The hon. Member for Shoreditch disclaimed any intention of working the tramways, and of course he accepted the assurance of his hon. Friend.

Mr. STUART: I said that was a matter which must look after itself.

Mr. COHEN was sorry his hon. Friend receded somewhat from that position. That made him all the more inclined to say he did not think there was a shred of confidence to be placed in the expressed intentions—he would not say of the hon. Gentleman because he had disclaimed it—of the Progressive majority of the London County Council. His reason for saying that was that there could not be any consistency—he had almost said sincerity—in the reasons they urged for the protecting Instruction they asked the House to pass. It was said the Instruction was needed in order that the hand of the London County Council should not be forced in negotiating for these leases. He assured his hon. Friends opposite that if he believed the London County Council would be, or could be, in any way damaged in negotiating the leases, he would not only not oppose but he would support the Instruction. The very contrary was the case. The Council were protected by the fact that, as soon as they satisfied the Board of Trade that they were unable to get reasonable terms from their suggested lessees, they would be armed with the power hon. Gentlemen proposed to endow them with. He regarded the intervention of the Board of Trade as absolutely essential for the economy, if not for the pure and honest management of the tramways. He did not suggest for a moment that the past, present or future London County Council could in any way be amenable to any corrupt influences of any kind, but he thought the House would see that to expose popularly elected bodies to the pressure which hon. Members knew constituencies would exercise was unwise in the highest degree. It was said only on Tuesday by Mr. Charles Harrison that the House of Lords decided that it should be open to the Council to work the tramways. The question of working the tramways was never before their Lordships and was never pronounced upon by them. The right of working the tramways had been prohibited by Parliament, and that right ought not to be restored in this case without cogent and irresistible reason; and certainly not upon the absurd pretext that it was necessary to protect the London County Council in negotiations in regard to the tramways with possible lessees. He was surprised at the boldness with which some hon. Members had urged that they were urging this question in the interest of the London ratepayers; considering that Mr. Charles Harrison, the prime mover in this project for having the tramways worked by the County Council, had his majority of 1,373 reduced to 872 at the last County Council election; that his hon. Friend opposite had his majority reduced by half, and that two other Members prominent in the business—one of whom was the Chairman of the Highways Commission at that moment—were absolutely rejected by their constituencies. He said, therefore, that with those facts before them it was misleading the House of Commons to say that the issue was presented to the ratepayers, and that the answer of the ratepayers was that they were in favour of the working of the tramways by the London County Council. He was absolutely convinced that such a project would mean the introduction of unbusinesslike and unremunerative principles into the working of those undertakings, at the expense of the ratepayers and in conflict with their decision as pronounced at the recent election.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) said, he would not enter into the internal conflicts of the London County Council, with which the time of the House was unhappily so much occupied. The simple question before the House was whether, in the case of a Bill of the London County Council, they should suspend a particular Standing Order which gave power to the Committee on the Bill to allow a local authority to work a tramway only on the condition of leasing, or of endeavouring to lease, that tramway to some company. The Standing Order enlarged the power of the Committee, but it did not give them unlimited power to enable local authorities to work the tramways. It had been suspended in a considerable number of cases; and in three cases—

Glasgow, Plymouth, and Huddersfield—the local authorities were working the tramways, because they had not been able to get leasing terms satisfactory to themselves. It appeared that local authorities could generally succeed in getting round the clause, and work the tramways themselves, if they took the trouble to do so; but, on the other hand, if a local authority desired to lease a tramway, the clause threw some difficulties in their way. But the question now before the House was whether there were any reasons why the Standing Order should be suspended in the case of the London County Council. The hon. Member for Shoreditch had given certain reasons why the case of London should be favourably considered. It was pointed out that there were 30 miles of tramways which the County Council had already obtained the right to work; and that unless all the tramways were brought under the same system there would be difficulties as to transit and as to the interchange of fares, which in the interest of the people it would be well to avoid. That was the position of affairs. He would merely further point out that in Glasgow the tramways were worked by the municipality with very satisfactory results. [*Cries of* "No no!" *and* "Hear, hear!"] He was told by the Lord Provost of Glasgow that such was the case.

*Sir A. K. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he could speak with practical knowledge and experience of the results of the working of the tramways in Huddersfield by the Corporation. It might be that there was a balance against the Corporation in the working of the undertaking; but he thought the hon. Member for Marylebone must have somewhat exaggerated, though unintentionally, no doubt, the figures which he had quoted to the House.

Mr. BOULNOIS: I beg to state that I got the figures from the Corporation accounts.

*Sir A. K. ROLLIT: They may not be the last accounts published.

Mr. BOULNOIS: The accounts for 1894.

*Sir A. K. ROLLIT said, he still thought his hon. Friend was under some mistake, but whatever, within any reasonable limits, the balance of the income account for 1894 might be, he could say, as a ratepayer of Huddersfield, that public opinion was strongly in favour of the tramways being worked by the Corporation because of the great benefit it had conferred on the community. As an instance of the development of the undertaking, he might mention that, by an arrangement between the Corporation and the Post Office, the tramways collected the letters in the town and carried them to the outlying districts, and *vice versâ*. He knew that the general feeling of the Corporation, as well as that of the ratepayers, was that the working of the tramways by the municipality had conferred advantages on the community which were well worth whatever loss might have been sustained in the cost of working the undertaking. He, too, had had a conversation with the Lord Provost of Glasgow on the subject of the working of the tramways in that city; and he could say that the statement of the President of the Board of Trade was in strict accordance with what he had been told by that gentleman. The municipal corporations were practically unanimous in desiring that the powers asked for by this Bill should be conferred upon them; and they had passed a resolution to that effect through their representatives, and had prepared a draft Bill with that object. They thought the Standing Order was unnecessary and embarrassing to them; and surely Local Authorities knew best local wants and requirements, and how they could best fulfil their duties and obligations. For these reasons, and with the object that there might be another precedent for such municipal powers, the Corporations desired him to support this question being at least left to the discretion of the Committee after hearing the facts and arguments.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said, it was manifest from the speech of the hon. Member for Shoreditch that the London County Council did not desire this privilege in order to make use of it, as they had no intention or wish to run the tramways themselves; but they desired to have in their hands a weapon or instrument which would give them a power over the tramways companies in any negotiations that might take place.

Mr. STUART said, that, as to the views of the London County Council in regard to the question of working the tramways, he had no authority to say anything at all.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, that the hon. Gentleman might not have meant to say it, but that he did say it, was beyond doubt. He thought that in a matter of this kind, in which there was a bargain to be made between parties, Parliament should not interfere in favour of one party or the other, but should occupy an absolutely impartial position. As to the general merits of the question whether Corporations should work the tramways, he admitted there was a great deal to be said on either side, and they should endeavour to keep an open mind in regard to it. But there was one reason against it which the House would do well to keep constantly in view, and that was, that if they were going to give Municipal Corporations not only the possession of the tramways, which he thought they ought to have, but the right to work them as a commercial concern, they were going to bring them into direct competition with private enterprise in the way of 'buses and cabs. Though he put the rights of Corporations as high as his hon. Friend the Member for Islington, he thought it undesirable that the whole weight of the public purse—the whole weight of the rates—should be brought to bear in a competition possibly against existing private undertakings. That was all he had to say on the general question. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Islington, that Local Authorities knew what was good for them better than the House or the Government. But if it were desirable to get rid of the Parliamentary control in this matter which now existed, surely it should be done by a general rule of the Act, and not left to be brought up time after time in a flagging House, when on one day, by a majority of 15, a particular Corporation would get the power, and the next day by a majority of 15, another Corporation would be deprived of the power. If the thing was right let it be done once for all, and let it be done thoroughly. This control of which they were talking was claimed by the House of Commons in a Bill passed a few years ago, establishing the London County Council, and the regulation they were now talking about was passed by the House of Commons only three years ago. Of course, if in the short interval that had elapsed, the House of Commons had changed its mind, by all means let it say so by means of some general legislation such as he had suggested. It was now 10 years since he was at the Board of Trade, and things had changed there as much as elsewhere. In his time it was a tradition of the office impressed upon him, and which he endeavoured scrupulously to fulfil, that the whole weight and influence of the office should be brought to bear against any private Bill which sought to undo for a particular place or a particular purpose the general law and what was the general practice. He was told there had been great infractions on these precedents in the last year or two. The House of Commons appointed a Special Committee, which might be almost called an expert Committee, carefully to examine the circumstances under which power should be given to local authorities to provide electric lighting. But that caused corporation after corporation, and company after company, to come to the House, each with a separate scheme. It was thus almost impossible that the House could give to individual schemes the attention they required, and the House decided, once for all, to lay down rules which all companies and all corporations should obey. He understood that at the present time there was before a Committee of this House a Bill for establishing electric lighting which set at naught altogether all the regulations of the House. Again he said he was not at all prepared to argue that these regulations were the best that could be made, and that experience might not show the necessity for changes. But he thought it would be a most disastrous thing if, time after time, on the score of an application made by this or that authority, they were going to allow the general regulations which had been more carefully considered than any single case of this kind could be, to be overridden by a private Bill.

*Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) presumed that what they were considering now was the proposal by the London County Council that the Standing Order imposing certain conditions before a local authority could take over the tramways, should be suspended in order that they might obtain power to work the tramways without complying with the conditions interposed by the Standing Order. There was involved in this question a broad issue. If the House yielded to any application submitted to it on behalf of the City of London, it would be impossible to deny that right to any other Municipality which might bring forward any analogous claim. The point they were considering, therefore, was whether it was advisable or in the general interest that they should give to Corporations the right to supply locomotion to their ratepayers at the public cost. It appeared to him absolutely necessary that the House should consider carefully before they proceeded to legislate in such a direction, and deal with the subject in a general and broad aspect. Were they to give powers to Municipalities without restriction? Were there to be no defined borrowing powers, and no regulations as to fares? They should consider such matters before embarking upon legislation which might have the effect of inducing a Municipality to undertake the running of cars under the cost price of such conveyance. It would be absolutely essential from a business point of view that the House should make certain provisions by which it would be impossible for Corporations to convey passengers below the actual cost and to charge the loss upon the rates. Allusion had been made to the City of Glasgow, but it was premature to say one word as yet as to the success or otherwise of the tramway operations at Glasgow, because the finances of the city were so complicated. He felt it his duty to oppose the Bill promoted by the Glasgow Corporation which came before the House some little time ago, on account of two clauses to which he took great exception. But there were other clauses in that Bill which he suspected, for, whatever the intention, he seriously believed they might have the effect of concealing from the public the actual cost of the working of the tramways. It was believed in Glasgow that the Corporation had borrowed about £400,000 in order to provide for the tramways, but it was said they had no parliamentary authority to so employ it. They had, no doubt, in Glasgow splendid new cars, at fares 50 per cent. lower than before. But was it to be supposed that, under the generous, benevolent management of the Corporation, they were going to make a profit at fares 50 per cent. below those which afforded only a small margin to a company before? He did not believe that it was possible for any Corporation to achieve results such as were achieved by individuals working for their own advantage, and who conducted their business more economically than could be done by a Corporation. He submitted that it would be wise and proper for this House to interpolate carefully devised yet reasonable conditions before they allowed Municipalities to have the conduct of tramway operations at the cost of the rates.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) observed that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, to whom he generally deferred on matters connected with municipal policy, had imported into the Debate two matters which, from the point of view of London, ought to be replied to. The right hon. Gentleman suspected as a probability that if the London County Council had the exceptional power which he (Mr. Burns) denied that this Motion imposed upon it, that then he could concede the possibility of the Municipal Authority owning and working trams, in the exercise of that monopoly possibly restricting the freedom of living and employment of the men who worked cabs and rival omnibuses. The city of Birmingham owed a good deal to the right hon. Gentleman for having put a stop to private enterprise when that was opposed to the municipal and sanitary interests of his own city. The Corporation of Birmingham owned and leased the tramways, from which they enjoyed annually a net profit of £6,000. Surely the right hon. Member for West Birmingham would not deny to the city he so ably represented the right, if by a vote of the Town Council they so decided, to terminate the present condition of ownership and lease, and in the interest of the people of that city to work the trams without the direct intervention of a private company? He was sure that in such a case the right hon. Gentleman would take up the attitude he had taken up before, namely, that Municipalities, ordinarily speaking, should have the power to dominate over their own municipal destinies. He could conceive it possible that Birmingham, as in the case of Huddersfield, might undertake to lose a certain amount of money by the working of their own tramways, and if by so doing the housing of the people and the sanitary accommodation of the city were improved by that small loss. The right hon. Gentleman had said that when he was at the Board of Trade the traditions of that Department were against the locality having powers which others did not enjoy. That was perfectly true. When Corporations came to that House to obtain power to own their own gasworks, they invariably did so by means of private Bills. It became so inconvenient for the House to be continually discussing Bill after Bill, that, for the benefit of every locality that wanted to purchase its gasworks, this duty was delegated, under certain general conditions and regulations, to a Committee upstairs, with the result that 198 gasworks were now owned by local authorities. The same course was subsequently followed in the case of waterworks and electric lighting, and when the demands for working or leasing tramways became as numerous as the applications in respect of gas and water undertakings had been in the past, then he was sure that House would refuse to any local authority the right to come to the House and discuss these matters, which were much better left to the Committee upstairs under the general instructions and conditions. He wanted to point out to the House that the London County Council practically asked, by the suspension of Standing Order 171, that it should be allowed to place itself in the position that Glasgow, Huddersfield, and Leeds were now in. Why should Glasgow have, either by private Bill or provisional order, powers to own and work its own tramways, and a Bill to effect the same object for London not to be allowed to go to a Committee upstairs? What the Board had to determine to do was to show that this big city of five millions should not labour under worse conditions than were applicable to Glasgow, Huddersfield, and Leeds, and he believed hon. Members would subordinate their politics so as to allow the municipal authority to carry out their policy, which, since the recent election, had been endorsed by 70 votes to 55. He would appeal to the hon. Member for Dulwich, who had so worthily interested himself in cheap workmen's trains, not to stultify his action by declaring by his vote that the London County Council should not have a right to provide workmen's trams. He hoped the House would vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for Shoreditch.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) opposed the motion. He thought it very undesirable that the County Council should undertake to work the tramways. They were already overwhelmed with work, which, moreover, was of necessity increasing, and yet the hon. Member for Shoreditch wished them to work the tramways, and later on the water supply. The real leaders of the Progressive Party went even further; they wished to municipalise, or rather monopolise, almost everything; they wished the London County Council to manage the Secondary Education of London, to undertake the Hospitals, to work the Docks, to superintend the Port, to keep the Pawnbrokers' Shops—and in fact, in their view, the ideal of the Millenium would be that the population of London should consist of 118 Councillors,. 19 Aldermen, and 4,500,000 County Council employés. They wish to turn the London County Council into a gigantic trading concern. This policy was condemned by the electors at the last election. The motion in the Council in support of the policy advocated by the hon. Member for Shoreditch was only carried by a very narrow majority of the electors. He believed that a large majority of the representatives of London in the House of Commons were opposed to the motion, and he hoped the Government would not again use their majority in a matter affecting London to override the wishes of London members. Of course, if the London County Council could not get any company to work the tramways, it might be necessary, however undesirable, that they should do so themselves. That was a very improbable contingency, but it might arise, and it had been fully provided for. In such a case the County Council could apply to the Board of Trade, and the Board of

Trade could grant them permission to work the lines until some reasonable offer were made. That fully met the case. He thought it very undesirable to increase the ever-growing army of County Council employés; the County Council were already overwhelmed with work. He felt sure they would make a loss if they attempted to work the tramways, and would still further raise the rapidly-increasing rates of the Metropolis.

*DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire), as a Ratepayer in London, said he might claim the right to speak on the merits of this question, but that was not his object in rising. He wanted to know on what grounds London local questions claimed so much of the valuable time of the House. Only three or four days since, the Leader of the House informed the Scottish Members that he could not find time to introduce one or two Bills on Scottish legislation. Yet London Members came down here week after week and took up the best time of the House with their local affairs, and he as a Scotchman, pining for Scottish legislation, protested against this as an abuse of the privileges of the House. He wished to know whether it was not on the part of London the adoption of all the privileges of Home Rule, while they denied equal rights to Scotland.

The House divided — Ayes 191; Noes 158.—(Division List No. 41.)

## *QUESTIONS.*

### INDIAN ARMY PENSIONS.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether Honorary Lieutenant Quilter was granted a pension of Rs.165 per mensem on retirement on 23rd March, 1891, and whether he would have received Rs.240 per mensem, on succeeding to Honorary Captain Ryan, if he had been permitted to count one more month of service for pension; whether his claim to the higher pension was strongly supported by the heads of his Department and recommended by the Government of India; whether Lieutenant Quilter took part in the relief of Lucknow, and was rewarded with "boon" service of not less than one year on that account; and, whether, taking into consideration the fact that Lieutenant Quilter has received no benefit from his "boon" service, he will give effect to the recommendation of the Government of India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds), answering in the absence of Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Lieutenant Quilter received the pension to which he was entitled by rank and length of service. It is true that the Government of India recommended an exceptional concession in his favour, but the Secretary of State in Council was unable to accept this suggestion, which appeared to him to be based on a misapprehension of the rules. The present Secretary of State sees no sufficient reason for disturbing his predecessor's decision.

### BRITISH INDIA.

MR. D. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, that as Lord Cromer has stated with regard to his statement of 1882 about the annual average income per head, that though he was not prepared to pledge himself to the absolute accuracy of a calculation of this sort, it was sufficiently accurate to justify his conclusion that the taxpaying community was exceedingly poor, and that thus the calculation being sufficiently accurate, whether he will grant the Return for which a Motion stands on this day's Paper, as such Return is the only means of forming a fairly correct idea of the material condition of British India; and, whether, if he be unwilling to grant as a Return the details of Lord Cromer's calculations, as asked in the first part of the Motion, he will give an opportunity to the hon. Member for Finsbury of personally inspecting them?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Considering that the statement to which my hon. Friend refers was confessedly founded upon uncertain data, and that any similar calculation which might now be made must be founded on equally uncertain data and might probably be misleading, the Secretary of State is unable to agree to my hon. Friend's Motion.

## IRISH SOLDIERS AND THE SHAMROCK.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he is aware that on St. Patrick's Day the Irish artillerymen in St. James Cavalier and Tign hutments, Malta, were ordered and compelled to remove the shamrock from their helmets on the batteries being paraded for church, the order being given in one case by the orderly sergeant and in the other by Lieutenant Quain of Dublin; was a circular issued by the War Office, dated 16th February 1893, in consequence of the punishment of Private O'Grady in the Welsh Fusiliers in 1892, allowing Irish, English, Scotch, and Welsh soldiers to wear national emblems on the occasion of national or regimental anniversaries, at the discretion of Commanding Officers; was the Commanding Officer at Malta a party to the order for removing the shamrock from the artillerymen's helmets; and whether, in view of the fact that the shamrock is publicly worn on St. Patrick's Day by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as representative of Her Majesty, the Government will take steps to prevent Irish soldiers being subjected in future to orders to remove the shamrock from their helmets on St. Patrick's Day on the initiative of non-commissioned and subaltern officers?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): I promised a few days ago to enquire into the particular incident referred to in the question; nothing is known of it at present. With regard to the general question I may frankly state my view of it. I cannot see any harm, as a general rule, in permitting such gratification as the wearing of a national emblem on a national anniversary may afford. But discretion is allowed to the Commanding Officers of Battalions, and this, I presume, for two reasons: firstly that, after all, it is desirable that there should be some uniformity in what we call by the name of uniforms; and, secondly, that there may be circumstances in which the wearing of an emblem by one soldier may be a cause of offence to another.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The point of my question is that it was not a commanding officer who gave this order, but a non-commissioned officer in one case and a subaltern in the other. Surely this is a matter of sufficient gravity, in view of the fact that there are 20,000 Irish soldiers wearing the Queen's colours, to justify the right hon. Gentleman in telegraphing to Malta for information.

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Inquiry is being made into the circumstances. If they turn out to be what is alleged I will take the necessary steps.

Mr. J. REDMOND (Waterford): asked whether, in view of the fact that very often soldiers of the rank and file were not aware of the necessity of applying to the commanding officer for leave to wear their national emblem, the War Office would issue a general order to the effect that there was no objection to Irish soldiers wearing the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I occupy a neutral position in this matter, as I belong to a country, the emblem of which does not lend itself to the convenience of a button-hole. But really I think a commanding officer who is responsible and who has to exercise his discretion should, unless he sees any particular reason, such as that to which I have alluded, allow every latitude and facility for the display of a laudable national sentiment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY gave notice he should revert to this subject.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiry by telegraph?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: With the Easter holidays so near I hope to have information when the House reassembles.

## POST OFFICE SERVANTS.

Mr. J. A. M. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether the Chairman of the Tracers' Association was recently degraded and his pay reduced for forwarding to him, at the request of the Association, a resolution unanimously adopted by its members; and whether, if so, there is any regulation of the Service which prohibits the officials of any union of Post Office servants from communicating with him on behalf of the union?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): It is the fact that a tracer was recently degraded and his pay reduced because he telegraphed a resolution to me direct at my private residence, instead of submitting a memorial through his superior officers. Not much more than a year before, however, he had, in conjunction with others, committed precisely the same offence, and with those others expressed regret for the action, and asked permission to withdraw the papers. It is obvious, therefore, that the tracer in question was well aware of the rule which he wilfully disregarded. That rule, which, I believe, obtains not only in the Post Office but throughout the Civil Service, directs officers to forward memorials with reference to the conditions of their service to the head of their department through their superior officers, and I must adhere to a rule which is essential both in the interest of individuals and of the discipline of the staff.

### THE OPIUM COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Ruschcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether the assurance given on 11th February that the House would be in possession of the Report of the Opium Commission before Easter will be realised?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Secretary of State has no power to give any assurance with regard to the date at which the Royal Commission may send in their Report; but, having made inquiries, he has still reason to think that it may be presented by the 11th April.

### ROYAL COMMISSION ON TUBERCULOSIS.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether, considering that during the last two years 19 questions have been addressed to him as to the delay in publishing the Report of the Departmental Committee, he will state what explanations the Commission gives for the delay; how it is that while the Report, according to his statement on 28th May, 1894, was then being revised in passing through the press, it is still incomplete and unpublished; and, if he is aware that great inconvenience has been caused by the protracted delay?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I have stated, in reply to previous questions, the explanations which I have received as to the delay in the Report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, and I must disclaim any personal responsibility for the delay, which was largely owing to the long illness and death of the late Chairman, Lord Basing. I am glad to say, however, that I believe the Report was signed yesterday. A supplementary Report by one of the Commissioners is now being printed, and it is expected that this will very shortly be signed. Both Reports will then be sent in.

### THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACTS.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he will issue instructions to Inspectors of Factories and Workshops that a place where manual labour is exercised for the purpose of gain in such processes as those of sorting rags, packing goods, or bottling liquors, is a workshop within the meaning of the Factory and Workshop Acts and the Public Health Act, 1875, without regard to the question whether tools or implements are used in such process, or whether he will (if necessary) introduce such an Amendment to the Factories and Workshops Bill of this Session as will provide that all such places shall be treated as workshops within the meaning of those Acts?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I have no power to issue the instructions suggested. The widest interpretation consistent with the provision of the Act of 1878 is already given to the term "workshop." To extend it so as to include a mere warehouse not connected with a factory or workshop, where the work carried on is mere packing or bottling, and not in any sense the making or adapting for sale of the article, would be a very great extension of the Factory Acts, and would bring within their operation the establishments of most wholesale grocers, chemists and drapers. Many of the provisions of the Acts are not really appropriate to the work carried on in these places, and the duty of inspecting them would necessitate a very large increase in the present staff. I must not be understood as holding that warehouses of this kind might not properly be made the subject of statutory regulation, but I think that, if they are to be dealt with as in the case of shops, there must be special legislation on the subject.

### WINDOW BREAKING BY SOLDIERS.

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention has been called to the proceedings of the Cork Corporation on Friday, 29th ultimo, when a city trader presented a bill for the malicious breakage of glass by soldiers of the South Lancashire Regiment, and several other breakages of glass were complained of as being committed by soldiers who wanted to get out of the Army; and, will the military authorities take any steps to compensate the aggrieved citizens or the Cork Corporation, who have to make good the damage done?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is true, I regret to say, that certain young soldiers in a battalion stationed at Cork, have been charged with the offence of larceny and window breaking. The cases are being dealt with by the civil power, and I am not aware of any reason why the public should bear the cost of making good the damage any more than in the case of civilian offenders. We have no reason to suppose that the object of the men was to get out of the Army.

### REPORTS ON AGRICULTURE, BOUNTIES, AND TRADE ABROAD.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is proposed to publish Reports on Agriculture, Bounties, and Trade in each of the several countries of Europe and in the United States for the year 1894, similar to the Report recently published with regard to France; and whether, in compiling such Reports, care will be taken to reduce, where possible, foreign money, weights and measures to English, so as to facilitate comparison with English statistics?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Her Majesty's Representatives abroad have been instructed to furnish Reports on Bounties in continuation of those called for in 1889. Portions of Sir H. Crowe's report are in answer to a request made by the Royal Commission on Agriculture for special Reports on the agricultural position of France and Germany, and on the agricultural position and power of competition in agricultural produce of Russia, the United States, and the Argentine Republic. It is thought that special reports from these principal countries mentioned by the Royal Commission will be sufficient, seeing that the annual reports from Her Majesty's Consuls contain much information on agriculture. Attention will be paid to the conversion of weights, measures, and money.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH asked whether reports from Holland, Belgium, and Denmark might be included?

SIR E. GREY said, he should consider the point.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) asked whether reports from South America would be included.

SIR E. GREY said, the Argentine would be included.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked whether there was any idea when the reports would be obtained.

SIR E. GREY said, the Report from the Argentine would take longer than a report, say, from Belgium.

### THROUGH RAILWAY RATES FROM IRELAND.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, although the North Eastern Company have given through rates from Belfast and Larne, yet they refuse to put through rates in operation, either for cattle or goods traffic, between interior Irish stations and stations on their system; and if he can make representation to the Railway Companies on the subject?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Board of Trade have communicated with the Railway Company on the subject of the hon. Member's question, and I gather from their reply that the company are prepared to consider any applications for through rates from traders in Ireland. The company say that they are not prepared, however, to grant through rates for all of their stations to all inland stations in Ireland, but that they must deal with each case or group of cases separately.

### THE WELSH COMMISSIONERS.

**Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH:** I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state to the House the names of the proposed Welsh Commissioners before asking the House to consider the Established Church (Wales) Bill in Committee?

**Mr. ASQUITH:** I do not expect to be in a position to state the names of the proposed Commissioners before going into Committee. The names will, of course, be given, as was done in the case of the Irish Church Bill, in good time before the clause is reached.

**Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH** said the names would occur early in the Bill.

**Mr. ASQUITH:** They are much later than in the case of the Irish Church Bill. I will take care adequate time is given.

### LISTOWEL LICENSING SESSIONS.

**Mr. R. M. DANE:** On behalf of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. J. Ross), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that, at the October Licensing Sessions held at Listowel, a majority of the Bench, consisting of lately-appointed magistrates, granted a licence to a young girl called Mary Horgan, though her father, John Horgan, already held a public-house licence in the same town; (2) whether his attention has further been drawn to the statement of the County Court Judge, on the application for a transfer, that it was a gross scandal in the administration of justice that the licence should be used for such a purpose, or that magistrates should come there to put money in a man's pocket, and increase the public-houses in the town; and (3) whether any steps can be taken to prevent the repetition of such an occurrence?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne):** The facts, I am informed, are substantially as stated in the question, though it is not correct to say that the majority of the magistrates who were present on the occasion of the granting of the licence at the October Sessions were appointed since the present Government entered Office. Moreover, the voting took place in the magistrates' room, and it is not known how they individually voted. As regards the last paragraph, the hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware that the matter is not one in which the Executive Government has power to interfere in any way.

### THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY CONFERENCE.

**Mr. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid):** I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any representations have been received from Australasia on the subject of the International Monetary Conference; if so, will he state the purport of such representations; and what steps, if any, have been taken to give them effect?

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar):** Representations have been received from the Agents General to the effect that the Governments of the Australian Colonies desire to be represented at an International Monetary Conference if held; but, as the hon. Member was informed on Monday last by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Her Majesty's Government have received no intimation of an approaching Monetary Conference, and the question, therefore, of any arrangement with reference thereto has not arisen.

### THE ROYAL CANAL, IRELAND.

**Mr. J. TUITE (Westmeath, N.):** I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that since the inspection of the Royal Canal, Ireland, by General Hutchinson, in July last year, practically nothing has been done by the owners, the Midland and Great Western Railway Company, to improve its condition; and whether, having regard to General Hutchinson's condemnation of the state of the water way, lock gates, tow paths, harbours, passing places, &c., and to the neglect of the Company to remedy the very serious defects complained of, steps will be taken by the Board of Trade to have the promised re-inspection of the Canal at an early date, with a view to further proceedings?

MR. BRYCE: The Board are in communication with the authorities of the Royal Canal, and will press them to carry out General Hutchinson's recommendations. In February this year the Board received a Report from the Engineer of the Canal, which indicated some progress with the works; I shall be happy to show the Report to the hon. Member. The Board propose, before long, to order a re-inspection.

### THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. DANE: On behalf of Mr. J. Ross, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the Land Commission have fixed a sitting of a sub-Commission in Cavan during the sitting of the County Court of Cavan, when the solicitors for landlords and tenants will be engaged and cannot attend the sub-Commission Court, and have the solicitors through their secretary made a representation to the Head Commission of the inconvenience attending this arrangement; and can he make any representation to the Commissioners with a view to an alteration of the date of the sitting of the sub-Commission?

MR. J. MORLEY: The fact is as stated in the first part of the question. The Land Commissioners inform me that all the parties whose cases have been listed for hearing before the sub-Commission have long since been noticed to attend upon the date mentioned, and that they regret they cannot now postpone the sitting. The sittings of both courts will be held in different rooms of the same building, and the Commissioners will communicate with the chairman of the sub-Commission requesting him as far as possible to facilitate the parties interested, so as to obviate any inconvenience arising.

### LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS.

MR. T. BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in hiring allotments under Section 10 of the Local Government Act of 1894, Parish Councils are restricted to hiring them for the benefit only of such persons as are included under the term "the labouring population," used in Section 2 of the Allotments Act, 1887; and whether that term includes any, and, if so, what, classes of persons who do not fall under the denomination of labourers as described in the judgment of Lord Ellenborough, and reported in Lowther *v.* Earl of Radnor, 8 East., p. 113, and of the present Master of the Rolls in Morgan *v.* London General Omnibus Company 13 Q. B. D., p. 832?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I am advised that a Parish Council can only hire land for allotments for the benefit of persons of the labouring population. I have no authority to define the expression "labouring population;" but I think it may fairly be taken to include persons employed in manual labour and any others who would usually be considered as belonging to the labouring class.

MR. BUCKNILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to tell us more distinctly what "manual labour" is?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I think the hon. Member is as well able to give a definition of that as I am.

### RELIEF WAGES.

MR. J. KEIR-HARDIE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Rotherham Board of Guardians only pay men engaged on relief works 7d. per day, with 2d. per day for wife and 2d. for each child, and have stated that they have no legal powers to pay a higher scale of relief wages; and whether he will inform them as to what their powers are?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have received a communication on this matter from the Rotherham Guardians. Their clerk informs me that they are fully aware that there is no scale of payment for relief work laid down by the Local Government Board. The only rule laid down by the Board is that at least one-half of the relief shall be given in kind, such as food and other articles of necessity. Beyond this the Board have never interfered with the discretion of the Guardians.

### FREE GRANTS TO IRISH RAILWAYS.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the amount of the free grants given to the counties of Mayo and Sligo respectively under various Acts since 1883 for the construction of railways, and what annual subsidy in addition is the Government responsible for; and what are the figures for similar purposes for the county of Roscommon?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): The free grants to the county of Mayo are in respect of the Ballina-Killala, the Westport-Mallaranny, and the Achill Extension lines, amounting altogether to £248,900. There has been a free grant to the counties of Mayo and Sligo together, of £150,000 in respect of the Collooney-Claremorris line. The county of Roscommon has received none. The annual subsidies payable are: Mayo, £4,193 for three lines; Sligo, £1,600 for one line, and for Roscommon nothing.

### PRESS TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGES.

Mr. W. L. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been directed to a letter in *The Times* of 19th March, signed by A. G. Jeans, Chairman of the Press Association, in which Mr. Jeans challenges the accuracy of the estimate of loss on Press telegraphic messages made by the Postmaster General at the meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce; and, whether he intends to take any steps so as to have the matter investigated by a competent committee or otherwise?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I have read the letter in *The Times* to which the hon. Member refers, and I have also seen other communications in the public Press on the same subject. I have already, in this House, in reply to questions put to me by the hon. Member for Cardiff and other Members, explained that it was impossible to separate the cost of dealing with Press telegrams from that of the rest of the Service; but I added that the best estimate that could be formed by the officials of the Post Office pointed to the annual loss on Press telegrams being, at least, £300,000 a year; and, probably, a still larger sum. I see no reason whatever to depart from this estimate, and I should be quite willing to arrange for an impartial investigation, such as is suggested by the right hon. Gentleman, if I were to receive satisfactory assurances that the Press would abide by the result of an inquiry, and would undertake not to oppose the passage of the necessary legislation for a corresponding revision in the charges, if it should be shown that they are insufficient to provide for the cost of the Service.

### ILLNESS OF Mr. JUSTICE MONROE.

Mr. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the lamented illness of Mr. Justice Monroe, arrangements can be made for the execution of Landed Estates Court conveyances by one of Her Majesty's Judges of the High Court of Justice in Ireland acting for the Land Judge?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have communicated in this matter with the Lord Chancellor.

### THE REFORMATORY SHIP "CLARENCE."

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Committee of the reformatory ship *Clarence* have come to any new decision; and, whether the reinstatement of the captain has been arranged for; and, if not, whether the original notice of the termination of his appointment on 5th April will be permitted to be carried out in the face of the decision of the Home Office, in consequence of the conclusions arrived at by a full Official Inquiry?

Mr. ASQUITH: I regret to say that the Committee of this ship have not agreed to re-instate the superintendent. I have no power to reverse the decision of the Committee, but the state of affairs which results from the course they have taken is so serious that I fear I have no choice but to withdraw my certificate and close the school.

### BOILER EXPLOSION AT GLASGOW.

Mr. A. B. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, whether a tube of a boiler exploded yesterday, by which five men were seriously scalded and one killed; and, whether the explosion took place on a Babcock water tube boiler intended for, or actually on board, a torpedo boat destroyer building under contract for the Admiralty?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): I presume that the question refers to an accident which happened on the 1st instant at the Fairfield Company's Works, Glasgow. The Admiralty has called upon the Fairfield Company for a statement of the facts, and they have promised to send us a copy of their Engineer Manager's Report. In the meantime our Engineer Overseer on the spot has reported that the accident occurred when steam was being raised in a Babcock-Wilson boiler. A plug used for stopping one of the holes from which tubes had been drawn for trial purposes, blew out at a low pressure (about 70 pounds), scalding six men, one of whom has since died. This boiler is intended for a torpedo boat destroyer, building for the Admiralty by the Fairfield Company, provided only it is found satisfactory on the experimental trials on shore. This is all the information I have received at present. On receipt of the Fairfield Report I shall be glad to communicate its substance to hon. Members.

### SLAVE TRADERS ON THE CONGO.

CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, W.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Arab slave traders on the upper sources of the Congo have been conquered and destroyed, and their two principal towns, Nyangwa and Kasooge, razed to the ground; and, what measures have been or are to be taken by Her Majesty's Consul at Zanzibar to prevent Tippoo Tib, the great slave trader, from carrying on his traffic in slaves?

SIR EDWARD GREY: It appears from the reports published in Brussels that the forces of the Congo State have conquered the Arab slave traders and destroyed their towns, but we have no further means of information. Tippoo Tib is now in Zanzibar. There is no reason to believe that he is attempting to engage in the slave trade in any territory under British control.

CAPTAIN BETHELL asked whether it would not be possible to get from the authorities of the Congo State information as to whether these towns have really been destroyed?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I understand a Report has already been published stating that they have been destroyed.

CAPTAIN BETHELL asked whether that was only a Press report or an official Report.

SIR EDWARD GREY: If the hon. Member will give me notice I will see if we have got any further information.

### LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he intends to introduce his promised Bill amending the Labourers (Ireland) Acts?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that many Boards of Guardians in Ireland have postponed proceeding with further schemes of cottages pending the promised Amendment of the Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Acts; and whether, in view of the urgent necessity that exists for the adoption of these schemes, he will take the earliest opportunity of introducing the proposed Bill?

MR. J. MORLEY: I may say that a Bill amending the Labourers' Cottages (Ireland) Acts has been framed, and that when a suitable opportunity presents itself I shall introduce it.

MR. M. AUSTIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain a little further what he means by "suitable opportunity"?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will say possible opportunity.

### INDIAN CANTONMENTS.

*MR. CROSFIELD: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Holmfirth Division (Mr. H. J. Wilson), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table the Cantonment Acts Amendment Act recently passed by the Government of India, together with any rules adopted in pursuance of the Act, and any Resolution of the Government of India relating thereto?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: A copy of the Cantonments Acts Amendment Act has been received, but the rules framed under the Act and the resolutions of the Government of India relating thereto are not expected to reach this country till about the end of May. The Secretary of State has no objection to laying the papers on the Table of the House.

*MR. CROSFIELD: On behalf of Mr. H. J. WILSON, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, if he will lay upon the Table a copy of a Bill recently introduced in the Bengal Legislative Council by Sir John Lambert, conferring additional powers on the Calcutta Police?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Secretary of State is not aware that any Bill has been introduced.

## TOWN BANK GRAMMAR SCHOOL, ULVERSTONE.

MR. WILLIAM SMITH (Lancashire, N., North Lonsdale): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner with regard to the inquiry which was held by Mr. Hope in April 1893, into the present position of Town Bank Grammar School, Ulverstone, and the further inquiry by Mr. Coon in November 1894, when a scheme was presented which had been drawn by representatives of the principal public bodies in Ulverstone, and which scheme had been approved by the inhabitants generally, will he explain why the Commissioners have hitherto failed to either approve of such scheme or issue a scheme of their own; whether they are aware of the great inconvenience this delay causes to the inhabitants who are under the necessity of sending their children daily to schools at the neighbouring town of Barrow-in-Furness; and when the Commissioners intend to issue a scheme?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): The Commissioners have sent, for the consideration of the Governors, a draft of a Scheme prepared by them upon consideration of the Report made to them in the matter by their Assistant Commissioner in December last.

## GERMANY AND BRITISH LIVE STOCK.

MR. A. F. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if his attention has been called to the fact that the German Government has recently prohibited the importation of live stock for breeding purposes from this country, on the ground that foot-and-mouth disease exists here; and, whether, seeing that no case of foot-and-mouth disease has occurred in the United Kingdom for several months, he will take steps to call the attention of the German Government to the freedom of this country from foot-and-mouth disease, with the view of removing the erroneous impression which appears to exist?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. HERBERT GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I took steps early last month to bring to the notice of the German Government the fact that there now is no reason whatever to suppose that foot-and-mouth disease exists in the United Kingdom, the restrictions rendered necessary by reason of the outbreaks which occurred towards the close of last year having been withdrawn as from the 15th January last. I trust that the result may be to lead the German Government to remove any prohibition against the importation of animals into Germany from the United Kingdom.

## ADJUTANCY IN THE YEOMANRY.

MR. H. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what are the qualifications necessary for the adjutancy of a Yeomanry regiment, and why an officer serving in such regiment and possessing the requisite qualifications should not be appointed to the adjutancy, so as to avoid, as far as possible, the practice of seconding officers from a regular cavalry regiment while there are officers in the Yeomanry who have served in the Regulars, and who are qualified and willing to take the adjutancy, and in this way save the half-pay of the officers so seconded?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is essential that the Adjutant of a corps of Yeomanry should be in full touch with the Regular Cavalry, so as to be able to carry out the latest changes in drill and organisation. The Royal Warrant therefore requires that the appointment shall be conferred on a major or captain on full pay of a Cavalry

Regiment. The system, which applies equally to the Militia and Volunteers, has been found most beneficial in its effect, and there is no intention of altering it.

### RELIEF WORKS IN IRELAND.

Mr. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution unanimously passed by the Board of Guardians of the Glenties Union, on the 29th March, urgently pressing on the Government the necessity of opening relief works in the district, complaining that inquiries into the condition of the people had not been made by any Local Government Board Inspector, stating that the poor rate in some districts already amounts to 6s. in the pound, and likewise stating that comparatively few people in the Union have taken advantage of the Seed Act this year, owing to the fact that the seed supplied in 1880 cost 8s. 6d. per hundredweight, never came to maturity, and put the Union to an expenditure of £4,000; and whether steps will be taken for the immediate commencement of relief works in this district?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have received the Resolution in question. The condition of the people in the various parts of this Union has been frequently inquired into, and works have been established in several divisions of the Union. There is only one division out of 27 in the Union in which the poor rate is 5s. 10d.; in the others the rate averages about 3s. The Guardians propose to distribute only a very small quantity of seed potatoes, the principal reason for this being, I think, that they were unable to collect a large proportion of former seed loans. The Local Government Board have asked the Guardians to reconsider the matter, and pointed out that the small occupiers ought to be given the facilities provided by the Act for cropping their lands.

Mr. MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that there was great dissatisfaction in the district in reference to the cursory and imperfect system of inspection, and that it had been denounced as an expensive one, and that the inspectors, owing to their flying visits, were called the "tandem-driven inspectors"?

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he did not think the description a good one, but he knew, from conversation with these two gentlemen, that they had taken every possible means—all the means that rational men could devise—to ascertain the position of the district. He should have an opportunity of seeing these gentlemen before many days were over, and he would see if any further inquiries could be made.

Mr. MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman did not know, not as a matter of opinion, but as a matter of fact, that the inspectors should consult the priests of the locality?

Mr. J. MORLEY said, these two gentlemen did consult the priests, and he had given instructions that in all cases they were to do so.

### THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the Comptroller of the Household, as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, whether he is aware that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners own most of the land of the village of Thorverton, Devon; whether Messrs. Clutton, as agents of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, have acted under the instructions of the Commissioners in declining to let to the Council of that parish land they desire to take for allotments under The Local Government Act, 1894, and whether such refusal is upon the ground that some of the proposed tenants are not labourers, but persons such as the village baker, carpenter, postmaster, and the like; and, whether he will call the attention of the Commissioners to the fact that the Act imposes no such restriction to the labouring classes as is suggested in regard to the hiring of land?

Mr. LEVESON-GOWER (Stoke-upon-Trent): In the parish of Thorverton, in which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are large landowners, the wants of the labouring population in the matter of allotments have been fully met. Nearly nine acres have been set apart for this purpose, and there are also a number of small holdings. The present applicants are tradesmen in the village who ask for some small pasture fields in the valley now occupied by farmers, together with hill arable farms. The Commissioners are not prepared to deprive their farm tenants of land which is specially valuable to them merely for the advantage of those engaged in other kinds of business.

Mr. DODD asked the hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that the hiring sections of the Act contained no limitation, and that they did not incorporate the old Allotment Act, and that, therefore, they appeared to be entitled to its provision.

Mr. LEVESON-GOWER said that subject had already been dealt with by the President of the Local Government Board in answer to the hon. Member for Epsom.

Mr. DODD asked whether the hon. Gentleman could take the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown upon the subject, because many of them were of opinion that there was no limitation.

Mr. LEVESON-GOWER said the hon. Member had better put a question of that kind to the Law Officers.

### FEMALE FACTORY INSPECTORS.

Mr. M. AUSTIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what are the districts covered by the present four female inspectors under the Factory Acts?

Mr. ASQUITH: The female inspectors visit all parts of the United Kingdom to make such enquiries as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector considers desirable. They are not permanently attached to particular districts. I may add that Miss Abraham has recently visited different places in Ireland, and Miss Dean is at present making inquiries in the North of Ireland.

*Mr. W. P. BYLES (York, W. R., Shipley) asked, whether the appointment of four lady inspectors had not been greatly to the public advantage, and whether the right hon. Gentleman could not recommend the extension of their number?

Mr. ASQUITH said, he thought their appointment had been a great public advantage, and he should be very glad to see the number increased.

### SLAVERY IN EAST AFRICA.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any of the districts injured by the recent swarms of locusts in Eastern Equatorial Africa are within the British sphere of influence, and what are the districts injured within the German area; whether he anticipates any serious destitution in either sphere; and, if so, whether he is taking any steps to prevent the increase in the Slave Trade to the coast plantations and to the islands likely to result from such destitution; whether he is aware that natives wanting work dare not go to Pemba or the other islands for fear of being enslaved; and, whether he will take the opportunity of abolishing the status of slavery in the islands, so as to make it possible for destitute natives to seek work there without the danger of being ensnared into slavery?

Sir EDWARD GREY: We have heard of serious damages by locusts in the districts near Machahos and Kikuyn in the British sphere, and in Bondei Usagara and Lindi in the German sphere, but it was hoped that the subsequent rains would relieve the scarcity which resulted. There is no reason to anticipate any increase in the Slave Trade in consequence. We have not heard that natives are unwilling to go to Pemba for fear of being enslaved, but, as I have previously stated, the question of the best method of putting an end to the status of slavery in Zanzibar and Pemba is now being considered.

### MAGISTRATES IN COUNTY FERMANAGH.

Mr. M'GILLIGAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of Catholic magistrates in the electoral divisions of Lattoone, Rogagh, and Garrison, county Fermanagh; is he aware that a list of names of Catholic gentlemen in different districts in County Fermanagh, recommended by leading and trustworthy persons, have been submitted to the Lord Chancellor as suitable and necessary appointments to the magistracy; and, if he can state whether such appointments will be made; and, if so, when?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor informs me he has no record of the religious persuasions of magistrates by electoral divisions. He has placed a considerable number of gentlemen in the Commission in the County Fermanagh, and has now under consideration the claims of several others who have been recommended to him for appointment.

## LABOURERS' DWELLINGS IN COUNTY FERMANAGH.

*Mr. P. M'GILLIGAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the inquiry recently instituted by the Local Government Board relative to the housing of the labourers in Lisnaskea Union, county Fermanagh, consequent on the refusal of the guardians to act on the representations sent in from time to time from the ratepayers of various divisions to adopt the provisions of the Labourers Act, Mr. Murphy, solicitor, Clones, who appeared for the labourers, drew attention to the fact that some of the labourers, and especially one, Mr. Jones, who had attended had been threatened by their employers, and received intimations to look out for other houses, and that there had been a marked diminution in attendance of labourers at later stages of the inquiry; and whether steps will be taken in future to protect labourers who attend these inquiries from such treatment?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board have not yet received their Inspector's report of the proceedings at this inquiry, but they will refer the question to him for his observations. Complaints have been made in other cases that notices to quit had been served on applicants for cottages by their employers, but I hardly think the matter is one which comes within the control of the Local Government Board.

## ARMY CANTEEN SUPPLIES IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary for War (1) whether he is aware that any portion of the supplies and groceries and other canteen requisites for the troops stationed in Ireland are supplied by the Army and Navy Stores; (2) whether, upon a total sale of £7,500,000 in those Stores, the Income Tax is levied on a lower scale than that taken from retail traders; and (3) whether he is in a position to state when the promised Report on this matter will be issued?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no knowledge of the fact alleged in the first paragraph, Canteen Committees generally being left to procure their supplies according to their own discretion without any interference from the Military Authorities. The only exception of which I am aware is the recent case in the Cork district, and in that instance the interference of the General Officer Commanding was in the direction of procuring good articles at a moderate price within the district itself. As to the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs, I have no information, but perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury could answer the hon. Gentleman.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): As regards the 2nd paragraph of the hon. Member's question, the assessment to Income Tax on the Army and Navy Stores is made in the same manner as on other traders, that is, on the actual profits on an average of three years; the rate at which the duty is charged is, of course, the current rate in force. I know nothing of the Report alluded to in the 3rd paragraph.

Mr. F. A. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, having regard to the statement that the recent order issued by the Commanding Officer of the Cork Military District regulating the supply of goods to the canteens in the south of Ireland would only continue for one month, whether, on the expiration of that period, tenders will be invited for the supply of the various necessary articles, as heretofore the custom in the garrison towns of Ireland?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The present arrangement is of a tentative character, and renewable month by month. I should be disposed to wait until we find how it succeeds before coming to any decision regarding it.

## POLICE IN COUNTY TIPPERARY.

Mr. F. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received an influentially signed memorial from the people of the parish of Cullen, county Tipperary, asking not to suppress the police station there, for the ratepayers consider its position to be the most conveniently central in their district; and if he will arrange to have the Cullen Police Station kept on, and one of the less useful police stations suppressed instead of it?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Memorial referred to has been received. Owing to the recent reduction in the extra force in the county it has become necessary to arrange for the abolition of the station at Cullen, which is a small village only one and a-half miles distant from another police barrack, and sufficient protection can be afforded to Cullen and its neighbourhood from this barrack. Under present circumstances, I fear there is no sufficient reason for a further continuance of the station at Cullen.

### TYPE-WRITING FOR MEMBERS.

**MR. T. J. HEALY** (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will provide type-writing instruments free of charge for Members who wish to do their own correspondence.

**THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS** (MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I am afraid I could not undertake to do so.

### ARMENIA.

**MR. C. E. SCHWANN** (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will use the influence of Her Majesty's Government to ensure that the Vicar General of Moush, by name Nerses Khara-Khassian, who is now in Bitlis prison, should be summoned to Moush to give evidence before the Commission and Delegates, as he is intimately acquainted with the origin and object of the alleged massacre of Sassoon; and, will he cause representations to be made that Dr. Humbartson, known as Murad Effendi, also lying in Bitlis prison, it is said under sentence of death, should be brought before the Commission for examination?

**SIR EDWARD GREY**: It appears from a Report of the British Delegate that the President of the Commission has decided that Murad and some other prisoners at Bitlis are to be examined before the Commission. The name of Nerses is not specially mentioned amongst these, but the Delegates have full power to suggest the names of persons to be examined, and the Reports received from them show that this power is being satisfactorily used.

**MR. JOHN AIRD** (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the provisions of Article 61 of the Berlin Treaty have been fulfilled as regards the obligation of the Sublime Porte to make known periodically to the Powers the steps taken to carry out the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds; and, whether the Powers, if periodically informed of the steps taken, have, as provided for in the Treaty, superintended their application.

**SIR EDWARD GREY**: The Turkish Governmeut have on various occasions communicated to the Powers measures of reform which have been introduced in the provinces of Asia Minor. Unfortunately, those measures have not adequately fulfilled the objects in view. The British Consuls in the various provinces have, in the exercise of their duty, brought this fact to the knowledge of Her Majesty's Government, and it has formed the subject of representations on various occasions. The extent to which other Powers have acted in the same manner is not a point upon which Her Majesty's Government can make any definite statement.

### THE NILE WATERWAY.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the official term "whole of the Nile waterway" is to be taken to mean right of free navigation up and down the whole course of the Nile and its tributaries, or to mean the whole of the area contained within the Nile watershed.

**SIR EDWARD GREY**: I believe the phrase mentioned was first used in a question put to me in this House. It was accepted and used by me as meaning the river Nile generally, but is of course not to be taken as a special definition of territory, for which reference must be made to the Agreements which have often been quoted.

### BOND TEA.

**MR. F. FRYE** (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give any information as to what is being done by the Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the Chief of the City Police in reference to bond tea trading shops, which are still carrying on business in the City and within the Metropolitan area?

Mr. ASQUITH: This matter is receiving full attention, but it might tend to defeat the ends of justice to state at present what steps the Police are taking.

Mr. F. C. FRYE: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has observed that in the case of a conviction of a person named Jenson at Wolverhampton for the sale of bond tea, when Jenson was fined about £51 and costs, the statement was made to the Stipendiary Magistrate that the Treasury had absolutely declined to interfere in bond tea trading, and whether such a statement is correct?

Mr. ASQUITH: It is not the fact that the Treasury Solicitor has declined to interfere in bond tea trading. He offered to conduct the prosecution of Jenson at the North London Police Court in December last, but the Grocers' Society, by whom it had been started, wished to continue it themselves.

## FOREIGN PRISON-MADE GOODS.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has carried out the unanimous Resolution of the House of Commons on 19th February, and taken steps to restrict the importation of goods made in foreign prisons by the forced labour of convicts and felons?

Mr. BRYCE said, that he had caused inquiries to be instituted as to what steps could be taken. The matter was not one that could be dealt with without full information.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: Has the right hon. Gentleman given notice of the introduction of a Bill on the subject, or can he fix the date for doing so?

Mr. BRYCE: As I have said, I am occupied in making inquiries, and until they are further advanced I cannot take any other steps.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that the Bill shall be introduced directly after Easter?

Mr. BRYCE: I have already said that, pending the inquiries I am now making, and the information which I shall receive from them, I cannot give such an undertaking.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: I am sorry to press the right hon. Gentleman, but I must call his attention to the fact that the Motion which was accepted by the Government directed that steps should be taken at once. Unless some steps are taken I shall have to consider whether it will not be necessary to move the adjournment.

Mr. BRYCE: I have taken what steps I could by making inquiries; I have no power to do more.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1894.

Mr. C. HOBHOUSE (Wilts, Devizes): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the fact that an applicant for land under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1894, being a freeholder precludes his application from being entertained?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: It does not appear to me that the fact of an applicant for an allotment under the Local Government Act, 1894, being a freeholder, would in itself produce his application from being entertained.

## ASSISTANT TEACHERS IN IRELAND.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether a present assistant teacher, who is classed higher than third class, and who has given more than five years' service as principal, is entitled to the bonus of £9 granted to assistants under the Education Act of 1892 and Schedule; and, if so, is it in accordance with the Act not to pay bonus to such assistants, many of whom had to revert from the position of principals from causes over which they had no control?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Commissioners of National Education have referred this matter to their Law Adviser, who is of opinion that they are not precluded from recognising the five years' service, though not continuously rendered as assistant, but interrupted by an interval of service as principal. The Commissioners have accordingly decided to admit assistants so circumstanced to the benefit of the second clause of the Fourth Schedule of the Act.

## DUBLIN AND EDINBURGH MUSEUMS OF SCIENCE AND ART.

Mr. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will state what are the salaries of the present Directors of the Museums of Science and Art at Dublin and Edinburgh respectively; whether the Director at Edinburgh has been granted an increase of salary personal to himself; and what were the grounds for such increase?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): The present salaries of the Directors of the Science and Art Museums in Edinburgh and Dublin are respectively £800 and £760. These salaries, as will be seen from the estimates, are both personal salaries, including, in the case of the Edinburgh Director, both house rent and fees, and in that of the Dublin Director, house rent only. This, and the fact that there had been a misapprehension, with regard to the house rent, of the Directors of the Edinburgh Museum, are the reasons why the personal salary of the former is £40 a year more than that of the latter. When the posts are vacated by the present holders, the salaries will be the same—£650 rising to £750 a year.

## PUBLIC REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will give instructions that, in the Accounts of Public Revenue, published at the end of each quarter of the financial year, the total amount of revenue from Death Duties shall be stated separately, instead of being included, as at present, with other duties under the one head of Stamps?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): This would neither be convenient nor indeed possible. The Quarterly Returns are made on the expiring day of the quarter, when it is only possible to give the total exchequer receipts under the various principal heads, which require some time to analyse. The Returns can only be given in gross and cannot be distributed into their several items, any more than in the case of the Customs or the Excise.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: (1) I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the payment to local authorities out of the Death Duties for the financial year 1894-5, amounting to £2,153,059, represents one and a-half per cent. (under Section 19 of the Finance Act, 1894) on the principal value of the personal property, which would previously have been subject to Probate, Inventory, and Account Duty, and represents the charge on a total principal value of £143,537,260; whether this total value corresponds with the total value of property previously charged with Probate Duty; and whether he can explain why the total value of personalty charged with duty, which in 1891-2 was £193,397,000, in 1892-3 £164,322,000, and in 1893-4 £162,866,000, has apparently so seriously diminished in 1894-5 as to be less by £50,000,000 than in 1891-2, less by £20,000,000 than in 1892-3, and less by £19,000,000 than in 1893-4?

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: (2) I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can explain why the amount paid to Local Taxation Accounts out of Death Duties, which in 1891-2 was £2,793,668, in 1892-3 £2,409,187, and in 1893-4 £2,359,030, has fallen in 1894-5 to £2,153,059, or £640,609 below 1891-2 (the last preceding influenza year), and £206,971 below 1893-4; and whether he proposes to take any steps for making up to the local authorities this diminution in the amount payable to them out of the Death Duties?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone his questions, as I have not yet the information upon which to answer him. I could not make any statement involving an analysis of the figures until some time after the end of the financial half-year.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Is it not the fact that the total Death Duties are kept entirely distinct and separate from the total general stamps and in a separate office, and, therefore, is it not perfectly easy to give the figures at the end of the quarter?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I must take the information which I have from the Department, and they say that the figures are in a lump, and that the items cannot be separated.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Does not the right hon. Gentleman see that the information I have is derived entirely from the public accounts? Cannot he follow me in the inferences which I have drawn from that information?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: If the hon. Member has the information already he does not want it from me. Until I make the Fnancial Statement I shall not be in a position to give it.

## LEGACY AND SUCCESSION DUTY OFFICE.

Mr. J. A. M. MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware of the great inconvenience and delay occasioned to solicitors and executors by the serious arrear into which the work of the Legacy and Succession Duty Office has fallen; and, if so, whether he proposes to take steps to place the Office on such a footing as will enable it to discharge its duties with punctuality?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I am aware that in the working of the new system certain delays, not of a serious kind, have arisen; but the Department have under consideration what addition to the Staff may be necessary to deal with the increased work.

## THE CYPRUS TRIBUTE.

Mr. PIERPOINT (Warrington): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer—(1) what amount of the Cyprus tribute is retained for the Sinking Fund of the 1855 Turkish Guaranteed Loan; (2) what amount of money out of the Cyprus tribute has been paid to the French Government in repayment of interest paid by France under its guarantee of 1855; and (3) what was the date of such payment?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: The answer to the first question is, about £10,000 a year; to the second, £33,000; and to the third, in the year 1881-2.

## INCOME TAX ON SHIPPING.

Mr. PARKER SMITH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the rate of depreciation allowed on steam and sailing ships by the Income Tax Commissioners varies in different ports, and even in different districts of the same port, and in particular that the rate for steamships stands at seven and a-half per cent. in the city parish of Glasgow, but has recently been reduced in the lower ward of Lanarkshire; and whether he proposes to take any steps to secure uniformity of assessment on competing shipowners in different parts of the country?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: This is a matter which is under consideration. I agree with my hon. Friend that uniformity is most desirable. The Board of Inland Revenue will use every effort to obtain it, but I must remind my hon. Friend that the matter is one in which neither the Treasury nor the Board have any jurisdiction, the authority to decide it being vested by law in the District Commissioners, subject to an appeal to the High Court on questions of law.

Mr. PARKER SMITH asked whether this was not a matter for general rule?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: It is entirely in the hands of the District Commissioners.

Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): Is it not a fact that at Liverpool iron sailing ships are allowed only 3 per cent. depreciation, as againt 5 per cent. at London and Glasgow, and that a similar discrepancy exists in the rates on steamers to the disadvantage of Liverpool as compared with rates in Dundee and Newcastle?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: What the hon. Member has stated is quite correct. The information I have received is, that these different rates are in use at Liverpool and other places. At the same time, I must inform him that the question rests entirely with the District Commissioners; and it is only through them that a change can be made. It cannot be made through the Inland Revenue.

Mr. PARKER SMITH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the recent decision of the Exchequer Division of the High Court in Edinburgh declaring that, under the existing Law, no allowance in respect of depreciation for Income Tax could be made on account of a ship becoming obsolete and ceasing to be profitable; and what steps he proposes to take, either by legislation or otherwise, to amend this taxation of unprofitable ships?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: The decision of the Exchequer Division of the Court in Edinburgh simply maintains with regard to ships the principle of allowance for depreciation which the Income Tax laws have laid down with regard to plant and machinery generally. That principle seems to me a fair one. My hon. Friend is in error in speaking of the taxation of unprofitable ships. The tax is on profits, and where a ship is earning no profits there is nothing to be taxed.

### SCHULL UNION.

Mr. J. GILHOOLY (Cork Co., W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the Poor Law Guardians of the Schull Union sustain a loss of £25 per annum on the residence of the medical officer of health for Schull, income tax on that residence will be remitted?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: This is a matter which should be arranged with the local surveyor of taxes. I am informed that the house in question is assessed on £12 10s. The ground on which remission of the tax is claimed is not known to the local surveyor; but, if the Guardians can satisfy him on this point, the remission will no doubt be given. As a matter of fact, the Duty has not been actually paid for 1892, 1893, or 1894.

### JABEZ BALFOUR.

Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford) asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether it was true as reported that Jabez Balfour had been removed from Salta; whether he was in the custody of an agent of the Government, and whether there existed now any obstacle in the way of his extradition?

Sir EDWARD GREY: We have not yet received any news at the Foreign Office.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Sir C. J. PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) asked whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce the Scotch Local Government Bill this evening; and, if so, whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer would arrange for the termination of the Debate on the Irish Land Bill at a reasonable time, say 11 o'clock, in order that an opportunity might be given for some discussion of the Scotch Bill?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER feared that what the right hon. Member proposed could not be done that evening, because notice of such an arrangement as he desired ought to be given. Many hon. Members had probably made their arrangements in the belief that the discussion of the Land Bill would be continued to the usual hour. The Government were very anxious to introduce the Scotch Bill, and he would see what arrangements could be made for that purpose on another night.

Mr. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked how much time the Government had devoted to Scotch business during the present Session?

[No answer was given.]

### LIGHT RAILWAYS.

Mr. J. A. BRIGHT (Birmingham, Central) asked when the Bill for the provision of light railways would be introduced?

Mr. BRYCE said, that he was waiting anxiously for an opportunity to introduce the Bill. He would take advantage of the first opportunity that presented itself.

Mr. J. A. BRIGHT said, that perhaps he might ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could not provide time for the purpose?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER replied that the one thing he could not provide was time.

### RATEABLE VALUE OF LANDS, &c., 1869-70, AND GROSS ESTIMATED RENTAL AND RATEABLE VALUE OF LANDS, &c., 1894.

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 19th February; *Mr. Shaw Lefevre*]; to lie upon the Table.

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return ordered—

"of the amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March 1895, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 65, of Session 1894): "—

| £2¾ per Cent. Consols. | £2¾ per Cents. (1905). | £2½ per Cents. | Local Loans £3 per Cent. Stock. | Guaranteed Land Stock. | Book Debt, 55 and 56 Vic. c. 26. | Other Securities. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Exchequer Bills, Bonds, Treasury Bills, &c. | Annuities for terms of Years. |

—*(Sir John Hibbert.)*

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 203.]

### CONTRACTS FOR FOREIGNERS.

Address for—

"Return of all Contracts for Articles of Home Manufacture made in the United Kingdom by the several Government Departments between the 1st day of April 1894 and the 31st day of March 1895, with Contractors outside the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 128, of Session 1894)."—*(Colonel Howard Vincent.)*

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Shop Hours Bill without Amendment.

That they give leave to the Lord Watson to attend in order to his being examined as a witness before the Select Committee appointed by this House on Trusts Administration, his Lordship (in his place) consenting.

### HOUSE TAX CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Hibbert, Bill to Consolidate Enactments relating to the Duties upon Inhabited Houses.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 23rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 193.]

### COAL MINES REGULATION BILL

MR. ASQUITH moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amand the Coal Mines Regulations Act, 1887. He explained that it was a non-contentious measure, carrying out substantially the recommendations of the Commission presided over by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The amendments of the law which the Bill would effect could not be conveniently discussed before the Bill was in print, and therefore he hoped that the House would excuse him from explaining them in detail on the present occasion. The main object of the Bill was to give effect to the recommendation of the Commission that there should be special rules in regard to explosions in mines rendered dangerous by the presence of coal dust and damp. One or two alterations of the general Act were also proposed, the chief change relating to the subject of deductions in connection with the wages of miners.

Bill presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 194].

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, that he rose to take part in this Debate, which was of such supreme importance to Ireland, with a feeling akin to despair. This feeling, however, was not due to any doubt entertained by him as to the course which he ought to pursue, because he had no doubt on the point. It was when he considered the difficulties lying in the path of the Bill that he almost despaired of the result. There were, in the first place, a number of Members in that House, and a large number of people outside, who were firmly convinced that the Irish tenants had already obtained more than justice at the hands of the Legislature. Then, in dealing with the subject of Irish land, they were touching a question which aroused the bitterest feelings and the most unpleasant memories in Ireland itself. There were thousands and thousands of tenants fighting against bad seasons, foreign competition, and low prices, and smarting under what they believed to be wrong legal decisions. On the other side there were landlords, with but a small margin of income left to live upon, and who saw that margin in danger of disappearing and naturally fought to preserve it. These were the last people from whom one could expect calm reasoning or sober judgment, and that added greatly to the difficulties in the way of a Bill like the present. In the third place, the measure was so complex that he feared he should be unable, not being a lawyer, to make plain to the House that which was plain to his own mind. He was glad that the leaders of the Unionist Party had resolved not to challenge a Division on the Second Reading. They had been taunted for that decision, but he did not see any ground for the taunt, the measure being one pre-eminently suited for discussion in Committee. He supported the Motion for the Second Reading because he was convinced that for Ireland itself, and for the Union, there was no safety except in a manly and resolute endeavour to grapple with the land question upon lines just both to the landlord and tenant. He would first refer to the question of procedure which the Chief Secretary had announced his intention of dealing with in Committee. The Irish landlords took a sound objection to the Bill as read a first time, their complaint being that the present procedure was costly, slow, and cumbrous, and that the Chief Secretary had not attempted to remedy this evil. He rejoiced, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had announced his intention to take the subject in hand in Committee. What was the present procedure for the fixing of a fair rent? A tenant wishing to have a rent fixed served an originating notice on the Land Commission. That notice went before a sub-Commission, comprising a legal gentleman and two agricultural experts. The tenant had usually to fee a lawyer to fight his case, and, if either landlord or tenant disagreed with the finding, there was an appeal to the head Commission. Other lawyers had to be feed, another legal fight took place, and costs were run up, which often exceeded greatly the reduction of rent granted. That was a costly proceeding. In its place the Chief Secretary proposed that the tenant should serve an originating notice on the Land Commission, which notice was to cost 1s. The Commission would then send down to the holding two valuers. In non-contentious cases, involving no complicated questions of improvement, the decision of these valuers might and probably would be accepted. Thus, in non-contentious cases, the whole costs incurred either by the landlord or the tenant would not exceed 1s. When, however, either the landlord or the tenant declined to accept the decision of the two valuers the right hon. Gentleman proposed that an appeal should lie to a sub-Commission Court constituted as now, and he stipulated that this Court of Appeal should consist of the permanent servants of the Land Commission, and they would therefore be the very men whom the Land Commission appointed now as Court valuers in appeal cases. Cases of appeal on points of law were, of course, to be reserved for the Judicial Commissioner, as at present. He thought the proposal a reasonable and fair one, and one that neither the landlord nor the tenant should object to. Passing to the Bill itself, and without beating about the bush, he would go to what was the kernel of the Bill—namely, the 5th clause, which dealt with the question of improvements. What was an improvement? He admitted the definition of an improvement in this

Bill differed somewhat from the definition of an improvement in the Act of 1870. According to the Act of 1870 an improvement must be "suitable to the holding." Those words were left out of this Bill, and he approved of the omission, for the presence of the words had worked injustice. The landlords and their representatives contended that the present definition of an improvement made "every expenditure of capital or labour which increased the letting value of the holding" an improvement. They argued that that was a new departure, and that it was unjust. In the first place, he demurred to the statement that ordinary tillage and cultivation would increase the letting value of the holding; it would do nothing of the kind, and no Commission would hold that it would. It was quite true that tillage of a high character would increase the letting value, but where it occurred it was protected in the Act of 1870; the definition of improvement there covered the question of tillage and manures that were unexhausted. He did not believe the phrase "every expenditure of capital or labour that increases the letting value of the holding" would cover ordinary tillage or cultivation, and he maintained that it ought not to do so. If the Chief Secretary intended it to do that he demurred, and for the reason that the tenant got the benefit of his ordinary tillage and cultivation in his crops, and had no right to get it a second time at the expense of the landlord by way of improvement. If that was what the Bill really meant, the landlord's interest ought to be protected by the addition of the words, "except ordinary tillage and cultivation." The next sub-section dealt with the question of increased letting value. That was a question of comparatively little importance so far as the practical working of the Land Acts was concerned; but, inasmuch as it had been raised, and the landlords attached great importance to it, he desired to make his position quite clear. Sub-section 3 of Clause 5 was, to his mind, the most enigmatic piece of print he ever read. The other night the hon. Member for Cavan, who knew just as much about casuistry as most people, declared—and he had great sympathy with the hon. Member's contention—that that sub-section as it stood would give far more to the landlord than he got now under the law. He was quite certain that if the sub-section were passed six months would not go by before there was a greater Adams and Dunseath case than ever there had been in the history of land in Ireland; and, not wishing to see that, he believed the sub-section could not be allowed to pass as it stood. What did the sub-section mean viewed in the light of the actual practice of the Land Commission? What was proved before the Committee upstairs was that when a rent was to be fixed, there was, first of all, a hearing in the Court, and then the two agricultural experts went upon the land. If they came upon a house and out-offices they simply ignored their existence unless the landlord claimed them. It was so much a matter of ordinary notoriety that the buildings belonged to the tenant that in 95 cases out of 100 the fact was unchallenged, and the Commissioners never took the slightest notice of a house on the land, and no rent was fixed upon it. If the Commissioners came across drainage work or reclamation the tenant had to prove the actual improvement work; it was not enough for him to say that a field was drained or that land had been reclaimed, but he had to prove that the work had been done and what it cost. After the tenant had done that the Commissioners allowed him a certain percentage upon his expenditure. So far as the overwhelming majority of cases was concerned that really covered the equity of the case, and if the transaction were not governed by the 4th section of the Act of 1870, if it took place solely under the fair rent section of the Act of 1881 by itself, he should consider it a very fair proceeding, and, upon the whole, reasonably satisfactory. But in the small number of cases in which there was an increased letting value over and above the percentage which the Commissioners allowed to the tenant on his expenditure, a great controversy had arisen. There were three legal Commissioners. [Mr. J. Morley: "Four."] The fourth had not sat for a long time; he never left the office. There were three who were examined before the Committee. He asked Mr. Greer—question 8,149—

> "Where you have decided this question of increased letting value, what has been your legal direction to the lay Commissioners?"

"My legal direction," he replied, "has been to them to give a percentage in a case of that kind of 5 or 6 per cent. upon the actual cost, and nothing more." All the rest went to the landlord. According to Mr. Greer, the landlord received the whole of the unearned increment, or, as the Law Courts in Ireland called it, the increased letting value. There was another legal Commissioner examined—Mr. Laurence Doyle. He was a very tough customer indeed. Whatever prejudices he had could not be fairly said to be prejudices in favour of the tenant. He made no charge against Mr. Doyle, who gave his evidence in a most straightforward manner; he was a very able witness, and impressed every Member of the Committee. The hon. Member for North Kerry asked the witness :—

> "At any rate, where the improvements give a letting value over the interest, the rest of the letting value goes to the landlord?"

Mr. Doyle, cautious as he was said—"I do not admit that in every case." The hon. Member replied, "But that is the law, is it not?" Mr. Doyle—"I should say it is." The House would see how cautious he was; he was not to entrapped. At all events, he was forced to admit that whatever he did as a legal Commissioner that was the law he was bound to administer—namely, that where unearned increment arose it belonged to the landlord. The third legal Commissioner examined was Mr. Bailey. He asked that gentleman, "Is this your procedure under Adams and Dunseath? It is proved that a tenant has expended £100 on improving his holding, that the expenditure has increased the letting value of the land from, say, 10s. to 15s. an acre. Is it the law that you will simply deal with the £100, and that the whole of the increased letting value will go to the landlord?" Mr. Bailey replied, "That is the law." He had elaborated the point, because very great efforts were being made to confuse this simple issue. They were told that certain lay Commissioners divided the unearned increment. What he wanted to impress on the House was that this was a question of law, and not of value at all. So far as it was a question of law under Adams and Dunseath, it was for the judgment of the legal Commissioners, and not for the judgment of the lay Commissioners, and he affirmed that during the 14 years that had run since the Land Act of 1881 was passed the landlord had received in all these cases, be they few or many, and he thought they were few, that to which he was not entitled by law. He said that on the authority of Lord Justice FitzGibbon, who told the Committee—

> "Being suitable and ameliorative they (the improvement works) of course increase its letting value. But the works are one thing and the increased letting value another. The works executed by the tenant are wholly his and are to be completely protected and secured against confiscation, whether by imposition of rent on them or otherwise. But, so far as these works may have brought out latent powers and capacities of the soil and so increased its letting value, that increased value does not necessarily belong to the tenant."

Asked whether he meant that this increased letting value should go to the landlord, Lord Justice FitzGibbon said—

> "Not only not the whole of it, but in every passage (in the judgment on Adams *v.* Dunseath) in which it is referred to it is stated that the interest of landlord and tenant in that remainder was to be had regard to."

The landlord party in the House had been hurling charges of confiscation against the Government and against hon. Members who were supporting the Bill. But he said, on the evidence of the officials charged with the administration of the Act of 1881, on the evidence of one of the Judges who had decided the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, and who probably was one of the ablest judges on the Irish or any other Bench, that the Irish landlords had for 14 years been receiving a share of this unearned increment which did not belong to them according to law. This matter probably concerned the north of Ireland more than the south, because those cases arose more in the north than in the south; but the view of the tenants, north and south, was that, while the soil and its inherent capacities belonged to the landlord, the landlord, in letting to them the land for 15 years, let also its inherent capacities, and that therefore, the result of what they might choose to do with the land during that period belonged to them and them alone. In that view he did not, however, agree. He desired simply to stand as a juror indifferent between the parties, and to try to do his duty at once to the House and to the landlords and tenants respectively. He did not, therefore, agree with the tenants' view, though it was strongly held by the tenants of Ulster. If the Land Commissioners, in fixing rent, took into account the improvability of the soil and its inherent capacities, he should say the tenants were entitled to the whole result. But that was precisely what the Land Commissioners did not do. He was bound to say that if the Land Commissioners did do so they would double the rent of Ireland. They dealt with the land as it stood; they calculated its carrying powers at the moment, whether in corn or cattle, and they never considered the question what the land would produce if it were in the hands of an enterprising tenant with capital. Therefore, as the Land Commissioners fixed the rent on the land as it stood, he said it was the tenant's for 15 years; but at the end of that term the Commissioners, on going on the land and finding it improved, ought to judicially decide in each case how much of the improvement was due to the expenditure of the tenant and how much was due to the capacities of the soil which belonged to the landlord, and so in determining the rent decide what the landlord ought to get and what the tenant ought to get. That was his view of the question. The House, however, should never forget that the question was more academic than real. [*Nationalist Cries of* "No, no."] The Commissioners examined upstairs agreed that it was academic, and some of them stated they had never met a case in which the point was raised. An issue of far greater importance was the question of the occupation-right of tenants. He would like to know what was meant by the fourth sub-section, which directed the Land Commissioners to have regard to the interest of the tenant in fixing rents. If the Chief Secretary meant by the occupation-right or interest of tenants the difference between a competitive rent and a fair rent, he thought regard ought to be paid to it; and, indeed, regard was paid to it even now, for no one proposed to fix a competitive rent in Ireland, because, as Mr. Doyle had said before the Committee, that was a rent which no one could pay. If the Chief Secretary meant that the tenant in possession was to get consideration which was not extended to a man who simply walked on to the land without paying anything, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman; and the whole of the evidence before the Committee showed that regard was paid to this point in the fixing of the rents. But the Irish landlords put a very different interpretation on the fourth sub-section, with, he should say, something like just reason. Lord Waterford, for instance, was clearly of opinion, according to his published letters on the question, that it meant that, when a fair rent had been arrived at, a reduction should be made on account of occupation right or interest. It would, therefore, be better to make the matter quite clear. He had stated, over and over again, that all he wanted in this matter was to make the Land Act of 1881 carry out the intentions of its authors. This question of occupation right was fully discussed in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords during the consideration of the Act of 1881. Speaking on August 10, 1881, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian said:—

> "They [the Lords] had introduced into Clause 7 expressions which led to the belief that the value of the tenant's interest was to be deducted from the fair rent before the fair rent was fixed. That the Government had always disclaimed. The Government denied that any deduction was to be made They believed that the tenant's interest should be fairly estimated on its own ground under Clause 1, and the fair rent similarly estimated under Clause 7."

Speaking again on August 15 the right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "When these words came before the Lords (*i.e.* the interest of landlord and tenant respectively) they were viewed as being intended to bring in again an idea which the Government had always emphatically disclaimed—viz., that the value of the tenant's interest in the holding was to be legitimately deducted from the rent which would be otherwise due to the landlord."

Lord Selborne, in the Lords, said on the same question of occupation-right:—

> "On the one side and on the other it would be the duty of the Court not to lay a rent upon the tenant because of the value of the tenant-right in the market, and, on the other hand, not to deduct from the landlord rent justly due because of the value of the tenant-right in the market."

If, therefore, Lord Waterford's construction of the sub-section was right, it was a departure from the clearly expressed intentions of the authors of the Act of

1881. It was never intended that this question of occupation-right should be considered in estimating a fair rent. In the Court the question had never arisen. The hon. Member for North Kerry asked Mr. Doyle before the Committee:—

> "You do not think that the legal revolution made by the Act of 1881 entitling the tenant to perpetual occupation marks any difference in his interest as should affect the rent?"

Mr. Doyle replied:—

> "I do not. It gives him a saleable interest as between himself and the landlord."

The hon. Member for East Mayo asked Judge Neligan if the valuer ever deducted anything in respect of occupation-right, and the reply was this—

> "No, I have never heard of such a thing. Since the Act came into operation I have been administering it, and I have never been asked to do anything of the kind."

The truth was that this bombshell had not been thrown into the camp by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but it was thrown into the Committee by the Judicial Commissioner, Mr. Justice Bewley, and whatever blame arose Mr. Justice Bewley must take upon his own shoulders. What did Mr. Justice Bewley say? He (Mr. Russell) never saw such a conclusion drawn from such a premiss before. This Judge, before the Committee upstairs, quoted these words from the judgment of Lord Justice FitzGibbon in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath:—

> "I guard myself, as the Master of the Rolls has done, from saying that the whole surplus profit belongs to the landlord, as I do not desire to prejudge the question which is not now before us, but which may hereafter arise, whether the tenant under the Acts of 1870 and 1881 has not an interest in the holding over and above his statutory tenure and right of compensation."

Lord Justice FitzGibbon thus expressly guarded himself from giving any opinion on the matter, but, paraphrasing his observations, Mr. Justice Bewley said—

> "I interpret you as saying if, after making allowance to the tenant in rent for his improvements, there remain any improved value the whole does not necessarily go to the landlord, because the tenant may have a tenant-right or interest in the holding quite irrespective of his improvements, which may be taken into account in fixing the rent."

In other words Mr. Justice Bewley calmly assumed that which Lord Justice FitzGibbon had expressly guarded himself against. The short and long of this occupation-right was clearly expressed by the right hon. Member for Midlothian in 1881, who said that the tenant's interest was guarded and protected in Clause 1; it was there made a marketable and saleable commodity to the highest bidder. It was not a question which was to be taken into account in fixing the rent; it was an asset Parliament had conferred on the tenant which he was at liberty to sell and which was a valuable property. He objected to the sub-section on a totally different ground from that stated by Lord Waterford. What was the position of an Ulster tenant? Suppose he went to the Court to get a fair rent fixed, proved that he had made many improvements, and then said he had an occupation right in the holding, which he valued at £500, and that he claimed a reduction on account of that. There were sub-Commissioners who would hold that that was ground for increasing instead of decreasing the rent. If that was the meaning that was to be put upon the occupation right in this sub-section, he said it was indefensible.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I will remind him and the House that that is the very interpretation I expressly repudiated the other night.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL expressed the hope that whoever spoke for the Government would tell them what they really meant by this occupation-right, and how it was to be taken into account. Turning to sub-section 7 of Clause 5, he came to the question of presumption as to the ownership of improvements. The landlords said that this sub-section spelled prairie value. He thought the landlords and their friends were needlessly alarmed at the sub-section. On every Ulster custom estate the presumption without exception and limitation of any kind went back to the creation of the world if necessary. Had they got prairie value in Ulster as the result of the presumption being unfettered and unrestricted? Was there a man who would dare to propose to take that presumption away from Ulster or to touch the Ulster custom even with his little finger? So far from this presumption in Ulster having produced prairie value, it had produced higher rents than those of Munster, Leinster, or Connaught. The operation of the law now was governed by Section 5 of the Act of 1870. Some people imagined that the Chief Secretary had invented these words for the first time, but 25 years ago this House expressly enacted that the improvements on a farm should be the tenant's until the contrary was provéd. There were five or six exceptions—leaseholders, for example, and a man whose valuation was over £100 not being given this presumption. He might be told that this was barred by the year 1850. A tenant who applied for a reduction of rent claimed, say, the house and out-offices on the ground that they had been built by himself or his predecessor in title. But if the landlord asserted that the house was built before 1850 the presumption disappeared, and unless the tenant could legally prove that the house was built by his predecessor in title the landlord got rent upon it. That was an every-day occurrence, and it happened only last week in Ulster that in five distinct cases where the houses plainly belonged to the tenants they were rented for the benefit of the landlord. That was how the present law operated to the detriment of the tenant. They did not hear anything about confiscation when that occurred. It was only when they proposed to lay hands on the sacred ark of landlordism that those dreadful epithets were heard. Was the house not of as much value to the tenant as to the landlord? The landlord or his predecessor had never put the stones there nor carried the mortar which welded them together, and what right had he to have the benefit of the house? What was it but confiscation for him to claim it or thus bar the tenant's claim to it? This clause would not work the damage that the landlords imagined. He said the House had a right to secure the buildings to the tenants who had made them. Supposing this clause were in operation and the tenant claimed for drainage and reclamation and relied upon presumption. Presumption was only applicable to visible improvements. The first thing he would have to do would be to prove, not only that he did the improvement work, but what it cost and all about it. How was the tenant to go behind 1850 to prove anything of the kind? In Ulster, on estates outside the Ulster custom, claims were made in which the tenant was unable to give the necessary legal proof. This section did not mean prairie value. It literally gave the tenant what was his due; he had in the main made the improvements, and he ought not to be put to expense and trouble which ought to fall by right on the landlord. He wished to say that even here he was disposed, if the landlords still maintained their ground, to compromise the matter, subject to the buildings being first secured for the tenant. There were two other short points in connection with this clause before he finished with it. A small sub-section dealt with contracts by tenants not to claim, on quitting their holdings, compensation for any improvement made by them, and provided that no such contract by a tenant nor anything in the Act of 1870 should authorise the allowance of any rent in respect of any improvement. He was glad to see this sub-section. Landlords before the Act of 1870 would not grant leases to their tenants, but afterwards gave them willingly. Why was this? He had a lease in his hand the other night. The whole *gravamen* of that lease lay in one clause by which the tenant contracted himself out of the Act of 1870 or any other Act in regard to claiming for improvements. It might be asked why tenants signed such leases. The answer was that they did so in the way that Irish farmers signed anything to remain on the land, and not be driven out to earn their livelihood elsewhere. He thanked the Government for their courage in inserting that sub-section, by which they said that these covenants would not in future be worth the paper they were written on. People talked of confiscation. How many improvements, he would ask, had landlords in Ireland confiscated under such clauses in their tenants' leases as the one he had referred to? Proceeding now to the next and last sub-section of Clause 5, and dealing with the assertion of the hon. Member for South Antrim on the point to the effect that Parliament intended that Section 4 of the Act of 1870 should be read into the Act of 1881, he would point out that the late Sir Stafford

Northcote on 10th August 1881 moved an Amendment in these words :—

> "The Court shall take into consideration the time during which such tenant may have enjoyed the advantage of those improvements, and also the rent at which such holding has been held, and any benefits which such tenant may have received from his landlord, in consideration, expressly or impliedly, of the improvements made."

That Amendment, embodying Section 4 of the Act of 1870, was rejected by a majority of 130.

MR. W. G. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, that he quoted to the House the distinct question then put to the Attorney General by Mr. Gibson (now Lord Ashbourne) as to whether he was to understand that the Act of 1870 was to apply to all the provisions in the Bill then before the House, and it was distinctly stated that the Act of 1870 was intended to be read in.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that it was very inconvenient for any one to quote HANSARD without having it by him. He was now going to quote from HANSARD, vol. 264, p. 1,489, where the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Midlothian, speaking on the Amendment of Sir Stafford Northcote, said :—

> "The doctrine accepted at the time of the Land Act of 1870, and which he certainly declined to accept the night before, was the doctrine that the enjoyment by the tenant for a certain time of his improvements might have reimbursed him for the cost of those improvements, and by a natural process they passed to the landlord. But that was not the basis upon which they proceeded now, and there was no occasion for it. The tenant's improvements were the tenant's own property, and he would not admit the principle that the time during which he had enjoyed those improvements was any reason for their passing away from him."

Could there be any clearer statement upon the point than the rejection of that Amendment proposed by Sir S. Northcote and that statement of the author of the Act of 1881? It was a fact which could not be disputed that, in the main, the tenants, and not the landlords, had made improvements on the land in Ireland, though where the landlord had made the improvements he ought to get protection in Court. He was in favour of the law following the facts and putting a difficulty in the way of the man who wished to grab the improvements from another. If the landlord could prove his expenditure on the improvements, he would still be able to get the benefit of them. Turning to the cases of exclusion which the Member for Mid Armagh thought rather hard and cruel in reference to demesne lands, he would remind him that this Bill only proposed to go back to the old law of demesne lands as laid down by Lord Fitzgerald. In regard to pasture holdings, he considered that to be a matter for compromise. When the landlords' representatives so foolishly retired from the Land Acts Committee last year—the most foolish thing that was ever done by them—he and the hon. Member for Louth fought the matter out, and arrived at £200 as a compromise on this question. In regard to the big graziers who lived in Dublin, they were not eligible under the clause of the Bill and never would be. He quite recognised that the cattle trade in 1881 and in 1895 were two different things, and in many cases the smaller graziers were in as bad a plight as the tillage farmers. But all the points in regard to them could be debated without any heat. As to subletting, that was largely an Ulster question. Subdivision and subletting were, no doubt, evils; and anyone who attempted to extend those evils would be doing a very questionable thing for Ireland. But those were evils which existed now, and to which the landlords had, in fact, assented all round. It was only when the farmer who had sublet came in to get a fair rent fixed that the landlord turned up and grew eloquent over the evils of subletting. The clause in the Bill would effectually prevent many of the evils arising from subletting and subdivision, and practically confined those evils to the present state of things. In regard to town parks, he wished to protest against the Courts, ever since the Act of 1881, having been engaged in deliberately narrowing down the definition of a "town." What had the Court of Appeal done? In a case within his own constituency they had given a decision which simply meant this—that every hamlet at a crossroads in Ireland which might have the characteristics of a town—having, that was to say, a church and a school-house. [An HON. MEMBER: "And a public-house."] He did not know about that and where a demand for accommodation land arose—and where did not that arise?—wherever these things came about, that was a town within the meaning of the Act, and was surrounded by a zone of privileged land. That was absolute nonsense. The Courts had been engaged for the last 23 years in deliberately narrowing the Act of 1881, and the privileges of those who should have been under the Land Act. Whatever the House of Commons did, it ought to make it impossible for any Court in Ireland to create hamlets with the characteristics of a town at their own sweet pleasure. The Act of 1881 was never intended to cover wealthy shopkeepers who had a field in the vicinity of a town for the convenience of themselves and their families. But wherever you had a shopkeeper who held land not for convenience, but because he was a farmer and used the land in order to make a profit out of it, such land ought to be removed from the category of a town park altogether. This was largely, in his opinion, a question of definition. As to the alteration of the statutory term of 10 years, he could see no dispute of a serious character arising upon it, and there he was heartily with the Chief Secretary; but there was a serious question when they approached the proposed abridgment to fixtures already running under the 15 years' limit. It was a serious thing to break a judicial contract any day. It was one of the worst lessons they could teach the people of Ireland. Then there was the question of the British taxpayer. For his part, he would not allow any scruples about the British taxpayer to stand in the way of any reform in Ireland, but he thought the British taxpayer, if he was on the alert, might have something to say about this. The Land Commission had cost a million sterling since 1881. The British taxpayer might say:—

> "We have spent a million of money making judicial contracts in Ireland that have been broken twice in 10 years; what is the use of doing anything of the kind? Let them make their own contracts."

The British taxpayer might send them back in Ireland to free contract. It would be better to let the British taxpayer repose quietly, and not rouse his suspicions. By allowing the cases to come in as the 15 years' statutory period expired, there would be 45,000 cases due in November next; if they broke existing contracts, and allowed the 10-years' limit to apply to these also, there would be 240,000 cases coming in, in November next. That would mean a block in the Land Courts. It meant that there must, perforce, be appointed an army of temporary commissioners to administer the new Act. Probably it would be a way of settling the evicted tenants question to appoint some of them commissioners. He admitted there was a good deal to be said in favour of this proposal, because the rents fixed between 1881 and 1886, both inclusive, were now admitted on all hands to be excessive rents. The Chief Secretary had had a choice of difficulties. Doubtless he had chosen the course of least resistance. Personally, he should have been glad if the Chief Secretary had adopted the plan of allowing a temporary abatement on rents fixed between 1881 and 1887; but, looking at the difficulties on both sides, he should not offer serious opposition to this clause in the Bill. The proposal with regard to future tenancies he welcomed. It was reasonable and moderate, and no landlord ought reasonably to object to it. He did not know why the landlords should object, either, to doing away with the right of pre-emption. To begin with, the right of pre-emption did not exist on estates where the Ulster custom prevailed. An Ulster tenant did not sell under the Act of 1881; he sold under the custom. Did any great grievance arise? He admitted frankly that the practice of giving large sums for tenant-right was a bad one. But not only did the right of pre-emption not exist in Ulster, but there was the stronger fact that where it did exist the landlord had not used it, so that the privilege was useless for its purpose. The right was unused. He observed that the landlords objected to the part of the Bill relating to the evicted tenants, because it did not give them two votese instead of one. If they did not want to take back an evicted tenant they had only to say so, and the proceedings were at an end. But if they cared to take him back, they said they ought to have another veto in case the Land Commission fixed too low a price. That was asking too much. It was perfectly plain, however, what the Irish landlords dreaded. They dreaded the price being fixed by one man. Why not allow the

Judicial Commissioner and two other Commissioners to exercise it? This, he submitted, was not a question on which the Government ought to stand. The words "revolutionary" and "confiscatory" had been freely used on the other side of the House. Well, confiscation was rather an awkward word for the representatives of the Irish landlords. He knew their position now. He did not desire to embitter it. Before, and up to 1870, they were masters of the situation. The tenant then had no legal interest in the land, no legal property of any kind whatever in the soil. His wretched position was often assuaged, he admitted, by kindness, by generosity on the part of the landlord, but at the best it was a position of absolute serfdom; and even the Ulster custom, which the landlords ate into as far as they could, often failed to protect the men of the north. These bitter days for the Irish tenant were gone for ever. They spoke of rents which were fixed at the famine time and had never been changed since. What was the basis? Every rent was fixed on the tenants' improvements. They denied the justice of any comparison between English and Irish rents. So did he. In the one case it was a farm fully furnished and equipped by the landlord; in the other it was the bare soil. The Irish tenant had, undoubtedly, passed into a new atmosphere. He at last was a free man. How he used that freedom was another thing. He had shown that in the past he had been ready to resist lawlessness even where it was born of despair. His position had been complicated in this matter by an ungenerous attack made upon him the other night by a supporter of the Government. That hon. Member was not ashamed to taunt him and say that he acted as he did now because he was afraid of his seat. He held for the Unionist Party a perilous and a coveted seat. He valued it highly. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, acting within their undoubted rights, had fought him twice with their best men, and he had no doubt they would do so again. But he declared now—and the declaration would be read in every corner of Ulster tomorrow—that if he could only hold that or any other seat by acting dishonourably towards any class, then he should welcome exclusion from the House of Commons. Since the First Reading of this Bill he had been in Ireland. He had been in the midst of his constituents. He had conferred with the representatives of the Ulster tenants in Belfast—with men who understood the Bill and the question. They were reasonable men; they were prepared to act in a reasonable spirit. And, while supporting cordially, heartily, and strenuously the Second Reading of this Bill, he said now that when the Committee stage was reached he should endeavour to stand indifferent between the two parties to this great issue. He should see to it, so far as his vote could do it, that the tenant was protected fully, and in a way no Court could misunderstand, in his expenditure of capital or labour. He should, on the other hand, be as anxious to protect the landlord in all that was justly his. He recognised his difficulties—difficulties not made nor created by the present generation, but inherited by them. It was an old issue they were trying, and if the House was weary of it, let them remember it was England which planted her system of land tenure on Irish soil. They would not be right until they retraced their steps, until single ownership had been restored; until the occupier should be the owner. Believing that this Bill would immensely facilitate this, he supported it with all his heart.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) sympathised with many of the views which had been expressed by his hon. Friend, and perhaps if his hon. Friend were responsible for the conduct of the Bill in Committee, it might be expected to assume ultimately a shape which even he could support. He did not believe there was a landlord in Ireland who had ever tried to coerce the hon. Gentleman in his views. [Mr. T. W. Russell: "Hear, hear!"] Knowing his views on the land question, the landlords had sunk their own opinions and had given his hon. Friend a loyal support. But it would not be the views of his hon. Friend which would govern the action of the Government; it would be the dictation of hon. Gentlemen from Ireland by whose support they remained in Office. In order to judge, therefore, what the action would be, they had to find out what hon. Gentlemen said on the subject of the land question when they were on the other side of the channel. In studying the speeches of hon. Gentlemen, he could not say that that study led him to believe that, when the Bill was in Committee, the Government, on the main points upon which the landowners agreed, would be allowed to "back down." He did not believe, however, that the Government meant this Bill to become law. He had occupied a seat in the House at different times for 20 years, and during that period he had enjoyed the pleasure of listening to some of the greatest statesmen in modern times bringing forward some of the most complicated and most important measures that ever occupied the attention of Parliament. He had recognised from their speeches that they realised the different interests which those measures affected, and they sought at any rate to conciliate the support of those who might oppose them. But, with this experience of previous statesmen, he gave the claim of absolute originality to the method adopted of bringing forward a difficult and contentious measure to the present Chief Secretary. There was a marked difference in the tone of the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman moved the First Reading and the tone adopted in moving the Second Reading. The First Reading speech was a very moderate one, so moderate that he had expressed the hope when he saw the Bill in print to be able to give fair consideration and possible support to it. In the Second Reading speech the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the Bill was of a contentious character and full of difficulties. At the very starting-point the Chief Secretary executed a sort of oratorical war-dance before his enemies. The right hon. Gentleman divided the representatives from Ireland into two classes. He said :—

> "In this House we were fortunate to possess some of the ablest and most ingenious Representatives of the tenants."

He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. He admired the ability of his compatriots, and no one could deny their ingenuity. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on :—

> "The landlords were represented in this House by a row of Queen's Counsel ;"

and, referring to his hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Dublin University, the Chief Secretary added :—

> "The hon. and learned gentleman made a speech full of that rather mechanical and automatic violence which is sometimes called forensic, and of which Irish lawyers have a large command, but which neither helps any question forward nor keeps any question back."

He could not conceive a more useless kind of Queen's Counsel than that. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to describe the other Representatives of the land-owning class in the House :—

> "One or two lay spokesmen who, I regret to think, represent that irreconcilable junta which is always violent, which is unteachable, which is always wrong, which always fights these Bills and these proposals with a blind and, I must say rather stupid, desperation."

Why did the right hon. Gentleman call the land-owning Representatives blind? He supposed because they had never yet succeeded in seeing the beauty of placing Ireland under the government of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Then they were described as being unteachable. Well, there were lessons which it was hard to teach to Irish landlords—say, for instance, that it was a pleasing process to be skinned. Under this Bill the landlord had no protection ; and it was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which had led him to think, firstly, that the Bill was never meant to pass, and, secondly, that he had been improving his vocabulary by taking lessons from his friends below the Gangway. Speaking as a layman, he declared that the Bill, if passed as it now stood, would bring about a revolution, for it would utterly sweep away and destroy one class of Irishmen. It was all very well for the Chief Secretary to say what he meant, but the Irish Courts, in interpreting the Act, would not first try to find out what the right hon. Gentleman, or even the Government, meant. They would take the letter of the measure as it stood, and the result would be that the property of the landlord would be confiscated, and that it would be impossible for him any longer to live in his native country. He looked upon the first clause of the Bill, limiting to ten years the period of judicial rents, as specially designed to satisfy the wants and requirements of the lawyers. They would reap a crop every 10 years instead of every 15. The expenses would come mainly out of the pockets of the landlords, but he believed that the amount which would be paid by the tenants in this respect would more than swallow up any benefit they would deirve from the operation of the clause. But the most important provision in the Bill was Subsection 2 of Clause 5, which enacted that "improvement" should include every expenditure of capital or labour on or in respect of the holding which increased its letting value. That meant prairie value—that the land was to be valued as if nothing had been done to it. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said that some landlords would be very lucky if they got prairie value. That would depend on the kind of prairie. When Cromwell settled his soldiers in Ireland the rent of grass-land was a sheep an acrea. If he could get prairie value of that sort for his land it would be an excellent thing for him, but the prairie value within the meaning of this Bill was the value of the game on the land in the days of Brian Boru. The Bill would sweep away practically the whole of the rent of every landlord in the country, and it was not a matter of wonder, therefore, that they should look upon it as a revolutionary measure which would destroy the present social conditions in Ireland. But that was not all. If the landlord were allowed prairie value he would get something. But the Bill brought in the occupation interest, and that was the finish. That provision was defended solely on the ground that Judge Bewley said occupation interest was now taken into consideration. That threw some light on the practice of valuing land in Ireland. They never before understood how it was done. They knew that two or three men came to the land. They looked at it, sometimes they tasted it, they invariably smelt it, and, having done so, they decided, according to the humour which they were in, on a reduction of 25, 30, or even 35 per cent. Now, they knew that these men took into consideration not only the character of the land and of the improvements of the tenant, but also his occupation interest. Was it not monstrous, because a farm was let low and consisted of good land, being therefore a valuable asset in the market, that another slice should be taken off the owner's rent? The combination of the provisions in regard to prairie value of the occupation interest were in themselves enough to sweep away all the rents of the landlords of Ireland. The position of hon. Members below the Gangway was logical. They had always stated that they wanted to hunt the landlords out of Ireland. Therefore, as the Bill was drafted under the influence, if not under the supervision, of these hon. Gentlemen, he could not put upon the fifth clause the harmless interpretation which the hon. Member for South Tyrone was inclined to put upon it. This clause was the sting as well as the marrow of the Bill. It was the "scorcher" of which the hon. Member for Cork had spoken, and if carried into law it would drive the landlords from Ireland. With regard to the evicted tenants, he could answer for the landlords that, unless some change were made in the proposals of the Bill, there would be an effectual bar to the reinstatement of any of these tenants. [An hon. Member: "Why?"] Because under the clause in the Bill the very fact of a landlord consenting to take back an evicted tenant would place him at the mercy of the Commissioners; and there was no landlord, no matter how willing he might be to see these men restored to their holdings, who would run the risk of placing himself at the mercy of men who had never, up to the present, shown much sympathy with him.

Mr. J. MORLEY: May I point out to my hon. and gallant Friend that the clause contemplates the possibility of an agreement between the landlord and tenant, such as may take place now?

Colonel SAUNDERSON said, he was aware of that, but if the landlord gave his consent, under the clause all further power was taken out of his hands. He was entirely at the mercy of the Commissioners, and that, to his mind, was an absolute bar to any settlement in a satisfactory manner of the question of the evicted tenants. He had taken up this Bill in no unfriendly spirit, because he had been more or less disarmed by the speech with which the right hon Gentleman moved the First Reading; he had hoped that he should have been able to give the Bill his support and help to make it a really good Bill. They all acknowledged that a Bill was necessary—that was conceded; but the present Bill was not one which he could support. That which struck him, after reading through the Bill, was the language contained in the the Preamble, and he believed that in the Preamble they would find the reason why the Bill was brought in. This, it was stated, was a Bill further to amend the law relating to the occupation and ownership of land in Ireland, and for other purposes relating thereto, and if those other purposes had not been before the minds of the Government and their Irish allies they never would have had this Bill brought into the House of Commons. Those other purposes were—to sweep the landlords away, and to try, if possible, to throw down a bone of contention in Ulster over which the Unionist Party would fight; and those other purposes, depend upon it, had been the leading and guiding motive which had brought this Bill into the House. The Ulster farmers, however much they might desire that protection which he himself was quite ready to accord them, would never allow a bribe, no matter how highly flavoured, to win them from that solid formation which they had taken up in confronting their opponents. That, he believed, would be proved at the next Election, and he was not in the least afraid of meeting his constituents, no matter what course he took upon this Bill. There would be no doubt before the Bill left Committee as to what he and his colleagues thought of its provisions; they would move Amendments giving expression to their opinions; and before the Bill left the Committee the right hon. Gentleman would be an older and a wiser man—at least he hoped so. It had been said that they did not propose to divide the House on the Second Reading because they were afraid of their constituents in Ulster, but they gained nothing by abstaining from dividing on the Second Reading. The Ulster farmers would watch their proceedings in Committee with just as much interest as they would a Second Reading Debate or Division, and would see exactly what they thought, and of what they disapproved in the Bill. But when the Bill had passed through Committee—and if they failed, as he believed they would, to carry out any material alteration in those parts of the Bill which they believed to be perfectly fatal to the position of all landowners in Ireland—they would divide upon the Third Reading, and then there would be no doubt as to what they thought of its merits. The right hon. Gentleman, in a speech which he made the other day, placed the new principles which actuated his Party on Irish subjects clearly before the House. He stated that the right hon. Member for Midlothian did not desire to make a holocaust of free contract; he hoped that political economy would some day return from its far exile, but they had to deal with that part of the world called Ireland as it was. That was the answer to every argument. In regard to Ireland, everything was capsized; what was treason in one country was patriotism in Ireland; what was robbery in one country was philanthropy in Ireland. He did not look upon the Bill as a *bonâ-fide* measure which the Government believed would ever become law. It was another instance of ploughing the sands of the sea-shore, an agricultural operation which was first performed by Ulysses to prove that he was mad, and for the purpose he yoked to his plough an ass and a bullock. Who the ass was in the present case they knew from the confession of the Member for Northampton; which Member of the Government represented the bullock he would leave to their imagination. They had no hesitation in opposing what they did not believe to be a *bonâ-fide* attempt to settle this land question. If it had been *bonâ-fide* the right hon. Gentleman would not, on the Second Reading Debate, have breathed defiance at the landlord class and its Representatives, but would have tried to disarm opposition and shown a desire to meet any fair proposal in a fair and candid spirit. They looked upon this Bill as robbery dressed up in the flimsy covering of an Act of Parliament. Some time ago the Member for Cork had said that the landlords in Ireland were made to be hunted, and that they should be hunted until they were hunted out of Ireland. At that time Mr. Parnell managed the pack. Now they had got a new master of the hounds in the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who helped, as far as he could, to perform that operation, which, he believed, instead of bringing peace, happiness, and prosperity to Ireland, would absolutely destroy it. The Bill contained principles destructive of their class, and, worst of all, it did not even offer them up on the altar of their country's prosperity, but tried to sacrifice them to the odious cry of political expediency.

[Attention was called to the fact that there were not 40 Members present. House counted and 40 Members being present,]

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said, it appeared to him that as far as the Irish Members were concerned, the case for the Second Reading of this Bill was so strong and had been so thoroughly made out, that it was really unnecessary for them to occupy the attention of the House at any length at this stage of the Bill. There was, undoubtedly, in Ireland, an unanimous opinion in favour of some measure of this kind, and the unanimity of feeling was never more strikingly illustrated than by the statement of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, who himself admitted that there was a necessity for passing a Bill of the nature of that before the House. He supposed that the hon. and gallant gentleman represented the interest of the Irish landlords in the House that night; but the speech in which he replied to the hon. Member for South Tyrone was, in his opinion, absolutely the weakest defence of Irish landlordism ever put before the House. The hon. and gallant gentleman declared, towards the end of his speech, this Bill was robbery pure and simple, very slightly disguised. If that word was introduced at all in connection with this measure, it should be in connection with the action taken under the Land Acts, which had already robbed the tenants of their improvements and their interest in their holdings. The Irish landlords had commenced by opposing every Bill of this kind, but in the end they had always been obliged to admit the necessity for legislation. The hon. and gallant Member said that, if this Bill were passed into law, he would be unable to live in Ireland; but in the speech he delivered there was no sign in the hon. and gallant Gentleman's mind of any such fear. Speaking for himself, he would say that the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and other landlords, would live in Ireland under much more favourable circumstances if they found the tenants around them satisfied and contented. The hon. and gallant Gentleman said, at the end of his speech, that he thought that the second part of the Bill would not succeed in accomplishing its object, and he gave as his reason, that the landlords would not consent to enter into an agreement, because they would not have a word in fixing the price to be paid for their interest in the land. It seemed to him a new state of affairs that a representative of Irish landlordism should cast doubt on the integrity of the Land Commissioners. He did not suppose that the hon. and gallant Gentleman imagined for a moment that if an agreement was come to between the landlord and an evicted tenant, the Land Commissioners would deal unfairly with the interests of the landlord. A new feature had been introduced into the Debate by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The hon. Gentleman was representative of men in Ireland most strongly Unionist in their opinions, and was himself, perhaps, the strongest opponent of Home Rule coming from Ireland to the House; and yet he was advocating as strongly as any Nationalist Member could, the changes contemplated by the Bill before the House. The hon. Gentleman, in the course of his able speech, said that somebody, on the last occasion of this Debate, taunted him with the fact that he was to some extent a new advocate of the interests of the tenant farmers of Ireland. All he could say was, that he thought there was nothing to be gained by recrimination of that kind, and as far as he was concerned he welcomed most heartily the intervention of the hon. Gentleman. The tenant farmers were to be congratulated on the fact that, if a Unionist in politics, the hon. Gentleman had given to the interests of the occupiers of the soil in Ireland great assistance. He could not help thinking, after listening to the speeches of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh and of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, that it was a pity that the case for and against the Bill could not be left to those two speeches. He doubted if anybody who listened to them could come to any other conclusion but that the hon. Member for South Tyrone had made out an overwhelming case in favour of some change in the law. As far as he was himself concerned, he desired to say but very little about the Bill, and he commenced by saying that he regretted exceedingly that it did not occupy the first place in the Government Programme. He did not deny the urgency of the case made out for the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. He was as anxious as anybody in the House that justice should be done to the people of Wales on that question; but the question of Disestablishment in Wales was not nearly so urgent as the question dealt with in this Bill, and it seemed to him to be to some extent a hollow proceeding to discuss this Bill at any length at the present time, because they knew perfectly well that unless some arrangement was made, which had not yet been announced, for pushing it forward, the chances were that it would not leave Committee in time to enable it to be dealt with in another place and to become law. Last year a measure dealing with Irish land was introduced into the Programme, but it did not occupy such a place as to have a chance of being passed into law. It was introduced in such a way at the end of the Session that there was very little time for its discussion, so that when it went to the House of Lords they were encouraged to reject it simply because they were able to say that it had not been properly considered in the House of Commons. The same kind of treatment was being meted out to this Bill, and unless the Government came to some arrangement to run this Bill side by side with the Welsh Bill, they might just as well save the time that would be occupied in discussing it, as there would not be time to pass it into law after the Welsh Bill was disposed of. This Bill dealt with the requirements of thousands and thousands of tenant farmers in Ireland. If the second part was to be operative it would deal with men now out of their homes, and how could any representative of the Government for a single moment get up and attempt to show that they were justified in placing a Bill dealing with the lives of the people of Ireland behind a Bill which had for its object the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales? There was no excuse for the Government in this matter, and no words could adequately express the condemnation which the Government deserved in having relegated this question to a second place. The change of the statutory term from 15 to 10 years was, in his opinion, justified by the course of events. In 1887, judicial rents were interfered with by an Act of Parliament passed by a Conservative Government, and in view of that fact he could not understand how any Member, even of the Conservative Party, could find fault with the proposal to reduce the term. He cordially approved the inclusion in the scope of the Bill of those tenants who had hitherto been excluded from the benefits of the Land Acts. He referred to the holders of town parks, pastures, and demesne lands. It was not too soon to deal with these cases, for these tenants had suffered much. They had seen their neighbours receiving statutory leases and fair rent, whilst they, who were just as much entitled to the same benefit, were excluded completely from the operation of the Act of 1881. The 14th Clause of this Bill proposed to limit the time for the recovery of rent to the two years after such rent had become due. He considered it a good thing that a landlord should not be allowed to heap years upon years of arrears of rent upon a tenant and so to get the tenant completely in his power; but he feared that this particular clause might have a disastrous effect in Ireland, because it would induce landlords throughout the country to attempt, collectively and at once, to recover large arrears which it would be quite impossible for the tenants to pay. He hoped that in Committee this clause would be modified and amended, because as it stood it was a direct incitement to Irish landlords to proceed against their tenants. The second part of the Bill he viewed as wholly inadequate. The position taken up by the Government last year on the Evicted Tenants Question was, that the evicted tenants had been so treated that they were entitled to look to the State to replace them in their holdings. The Government took up the position that so much was it the duty of the State to deal with these tenants, that State money ought to be granted to facilitate their reinstatement.

The Bill of last year was thrown out by the Lords, and now it had been abandoned by its authors. Under the present Bill conpulsion was not to be used, and the question whether tenants should be reinstated was to be decided by voluntary settlements. But the Chief Secretary knew as well as he or the hon. Member for South Hunts, near him, did, that in the absence of compulsion, no arrangement was likely to be come to between the landlords and the evicted tenants, the victims of the war in the Plan of Campaign and other estates. The re-enactment of Clause 13 of the Land Act of 1881 was offered to the Irish tenant farmers by the Conservative Government some time ago, and if, at that time, the farmers had been advised to take advantage of the clause, they could have done so with much more success than would attach to such a provision at the present time. Could it be imagined that men like Lord Clanricarde and Lord Lansdowne, who had been carrying on a fierce and desperate struggle with their tenants at enormous cost, would voluntarily agree to reinstate the very men who had been fighting them? The Chief Secretary might say "at any rate, give the present proposal a chance. Even if it only results in the reinstatement of half-a-dozen tenants that will be better than nothing." In his opinion, that would be worse than nothing at all, because by making the measure voluntary the Government were enabling the House of Lords and its supporters to say, "See how we have been justified. Last year the Government introduced a compulsory Bill; we objected, and now the Government have abandoned compulsion, agreeing thereby that we were right in the action that we took." That argument would carry weight with a great many people who were opposed to legislation of a compulsory character. Therefore, he affirmed that it would have been better if the Government had stood by their former proposals. The Chief Secretary had been asked whether it would not be possible in cases where agreements were come to between landlords and tenants to place some money at the tenant's disposal to enable him to start afresh. The right hon. Member satisfied himself with the reply that that was a matter which the Government would consider. He assured the right hon. Member that unless some money was provided it was folly to suppose that any substantial number of evicted tenants were likely to be restored to their holdings. The fact that no money was provided for the tenants would prevent agreements from being brought about. If nothing was done to provide tenants with the means of stocking their holdings the Bill would fail completely. Last year the Government proposed that compulsion should be used and that money should be granted; this year they had abandoned both those proposals, and he could not but express his disappointment in consequence. The abandonment of the position taken up last year by the Government upon the Evicted Tenants Question was likely to injure the tenants' cause. It would be better not to touch their case at all than to deal with it insufficiently and in a manner that was not practical. Sooner or later, either this Government or another would be obliged to deal with the question again, and compulsion would have to be used to compel landlords who would not reinstate their evicted tenants upon fair terms, to do so in the interests of peace, under a good Government.

Mr. EDWARD BARRY (Cork Co., S.) said his intervention in the Debate would be very brief. He could not help observing that the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh viewed the departure of his own class from Ireland with the greatest equanimity. He wished to view the question from the standpoint of an Irish farmer, and first he must express his sense of the inadequacy of the clause dealing with the evicted tenants. He did not hold the Chief Secretary responsible, for he did the best he could under the circumstances. He frankly confessed, however, that he regarded the merits of his Bill in its present form as completely overshadowing any defects that it might contain; but it should not be forgotten that judicial decisions often neutralised disastrously the best land legislation. The intentions of the Chief Secretary were everything that could be desired, but the decisions of the Court of Appeal had gone a great way towards neutralising the intentions of Parliament. It was difficult to exonerate the judges, or some of them, from the feeling of bias in favour of the landlords. But for the decision in Adams *v.* Dunseath there would be very little need for this fresh legislation except in the matter of subletting town parks and the like. That decision, however, plucked the heart out of the Act of 1881 and left it a very useless measure indeed. From his own experience of the Act he could not say that he had ever known a case in which, to any appreciable extent, the improvements created in the soil by the tenant had been taken into account in the fixing of a fair rent. The Commissioners sat in the Court, and they went through certain formalities, and it was even said to-night that they went to the extent of testing the land, but in his experience the result had been the same; and he had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if instead of sitting in Court the Commissioners went on the farm in the first instance the result would be the same. They valued the land as they found it, regardless of the improvements made by the tenant and the predecessors in title. This vicious system put a premium on idleness, for the more a farm was neglected the more the reductions were sure to be. The Act of 1881, therefore, had proved little better than a mockery, a delusion, and a snare to good tenants. In the case of careless and bad tenants it was different; having made no improvements they got off with fair reductions. But even in these cases the reductions made were far more than counterbalanced by the fall in prices. He cited cases in support of his contention. He knew an estate where two tenants went into Court in 1882. In both cases the conditions were similar. In one case the tenant had sons who cultivated the farm and added yearly to its arable capacity. In the other case the tenant was unable to do more than cultivate the farm from year to year without effecting anything in the way of permanent improvements. The improving tenant did not succeed in getting a penny reduction, but the other tenant got a reduction of 30 per cent. He wished to add that the improving tenant got a reduction of 20 per cent. voluntarily from the agent, who saw the injustice done to the improving tenant. He considered this case typical. As to prairie value he did not think that need disturb the minds of Gentlemen above the Gangway. Prairie value could not be worked out to its logical conclusion, but if it could in many cases there would have to be considerable restitution made by the landlords to the tenants. He knew farms which bore evidence that if the prairie value were applied it would not be a case of handing over the farm merely, but a good deal of restitution in addition. If under this Bill the fixing of fair rent was carried out, the rental of Ireland would be sufficiently reduced to meet the views of the Irish people without falling back on prairie value. There was one other question of special interest to him. He referred to town parks. He thought a population—and population was the best safeguard—of 2,000 was too exclusive. At least it should be 5,000. The hon. Member for Mid Armagh had fallen into an inaccuracy with regard to a case with which he was well acquainted. He desired to impress upon the Chief Secretary the necessity of adopting some safeguards against the recurrence of those legal decisions to which he had called attention, and also of importing some new and more sympathetic blood into the Land Commission.

*Mr. A. H. SMITH-BARRY (Huntingdon, S.) said, they all admitted that a Bill must be passed of some kind, and most of the Irish landlords were anxious to see a Bill proposed which they could all consider in a conciliatory manner, which would set at rest certain disputed points in connection with the Act of 1881, and which would be an amending Act in the strict sense of the word. But the Bill now before the House was not such an Act as that. The Bill appeared to him, and to all those with whom he acted on this question, to be of a confiscatory character. It would introduce the system of prairie value, and, notwithstanding all that had fallen from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, they still regarded it as being a pure confiscation of landlords' property. They also thought that the Bill contrived to take from them every safeguard that was introduced into the Act of 1881 for the protection and benefit of the landlords. He presumed the Chief Secretary knew what the Bill contained, but in his speech on Monday night it seemed as if he was scarcely clear as to what the effect of many of the clauses would be.

He would take the sub-clause under which the tenant's right of occupation was to be taken into consideration in fixing his rent. It was scarcely necessary for him to go into the effect of that sub-clause, for, if it worked as they believed it would work, the absurdity of it had been clearly shown by the right hon. Gentleman himself and by his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Dublin. The curious thing was that this sub-clause, interpreted as they believed it was to be interpreted, had already been acted upon by a County Court Judge in Ireland whom they had always considered as high in the counsels of the Chief Secretary. On October 10 last Judge Adams had before him in the Land Court at Limerick a tenant who applied to have a fair rent fixed on a holding of 4 acres 7 perches statute, with a rent of £3 5s. After considerable difficulty the fact was extracted that the tenant had recently purchased this holding, and had given no less a sum than £200 for the goodwill of the place. Judge Adams gave the old man a lecture upon the extreme folly of giving such a price as that, and reduced his rent to £2 10s. That was in direct anticipation of the clause in the Bill as it was interpreted by Lord Waterford and others. In the face of the possibility of such an interpretation being placed upon the clause, words should be inserted by which such a monstrous reduction as that, clearly in consequence of a preposterous price being given for a tenant right, should be prevented in the future.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The hon. Member must see he has no evidence that what weighed with Judge Adams was the price the tenant paid. He may have fixed the rent on the merits of the case.

*Mr. SMITH-BARRY said, what were the merits of the case he could not say, but Judge Adams stated there were no buildings and no improvements of any kind, and so it was clear that what he gave the price for was the right of occupation as distinguished from any tenant's improvements on the holdings. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the principles from which this Bill, which they looked upon as far-reaching and very dangerous to the Irish landlords, sprang are contained in the Act of 1870. Like his hon. Friend the Member for North Armagh, he supported that Bill throughout all its stages, but he must say it never entered into his mind that it would be possible for such a revolution to take place as to bring about such a system of land legislation as was now proposed. And he would venture to remind those who owned property of any sort in Ireland that, if it were possible for such principles as were supposed to have existed in the Act of 1870 to have produced a Bill of the character they were now discussing, those principles were not likely to settle on one side of the Channel, but they would probably have them enacted here on this side of the water in a very short time. When he heard the right hon. Gentleman speaking of the principles on which these things were done, he could not help thinking he had in his mind Macchiavelli's saying that "Every violent change presents the possibility of making another." The right hon. Gentleman had complained that when he had to bring forward such measures as this dealing with the land, he did not get assistance from the Irish landlords.

Mr. MORLEY: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I complained not that I did not get assistance, but that I did not get rational criticism.

*Mr. SMITH-BARRY hoped, that since the right hon. Gentleman made that remark, he had been satisfied with the criticism which he got from the hon. Member for the Dublin University, the hon. Member for South Antrim, and the hon. Member for Guildford. He thought those criticisms were not only national, but so far-reaching that they might well be looked upon by the general public as having knocked a very large portion of the bottom out of the Bill. But Irish landlords were not likely to look upon measures of this kind with very great kindness. They had had a very bitter experience of land legislation. They had been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian that "they had been acquitted," and that "sufficient sacrifices had been exacted from them," but notwithstanding that they saw one Act come in after another, sometimes introduced by their enemies, sometimes even by their friends, which took further slices off their property.

The right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) declared that rents in Ireland were too high. If the prices of agricultural produce fell, it stood to reason that rents must also fall. But there was one thing which never fell, but which went on increasing in value, and that was the tenant-right. He referred to the occupation right independently of the right in improvements. How was it that the tenant farmers were prepared to pay enormous prices for the tenant-right of holdings the rents of which they declared they could not afford to pay? So long as tenant-rights retained such a high value it was monstrous to say that the landlords' interests must be still further whittled down. Supposing that the agricultural depression had been as great in Ireland as in England—and that he absolutely denied—was it right or fair that the landlords alone, of all classes interested in the land, should suffer? In England, agriculturists had suffered bitterly; but the owner, the farmer, and the labourer, had all suffered together. He would pass to the second part of the Bill, dealing with the evicted tenants. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman proposed to re-enact Section 13 of the Land Purchase Act of 1891, because it would assist very much in the carrying out of a certain number of agreements between landlords and their ex-tenants. He had never pretended to think that the whole of the evicted tenants could be re-settled under the 13th Section or under any purchase system at all. If they were to be placed back on their holdings—and only a certain portion ever could be—it would be sometimes by purchase, and sometimes by reinstatement as tenants. But the right hon. Gentleman had put an *addendum* to Section 13 which would make it absolutely inoperative. It was not, as the hon. Member for South Tyrone said, that the landlords wished to have a double veto. The fact was this: under the right hon. Gentleman's proposals, if the landlord consented to place the matter in the hands of the Land Purchase Commission, he was bound to accept the price for the land which the Commissioners placed upon it. But the Commissioners would not advance the full value of the land except to a tenant or an ex-tenant who was, in their opinion, capable of paying the instalments upon that purchase. In the case of estates where the Plan of Campaign had been in operation, there were a large number of tenants to deal with, and it was impossible to know the circumstances of those tenants. But it was known that a considerable number were so impoverished that it would be quite impossible for the Purchase Commissioners to grant them anything like the full value of their holdings. Consequently, the landlord would, in the first instance, be bound to refuse the arbitration which the right hon. Gentleman offered, however much they might wish to come under Section 13, which offered great facilities for, and removed great obstacles in the way of settlements. That would be an absolute bar to the landlord accepting the arbitration proposed; unless the landlord had the power afterwards of accepting or refusing the price offered, he feared that the whole provision would be absolutely unworkable. The right hon. Gentleman said that if the landlord and tenant parties were agreed, he should be prepared to "implement" the provision by a money grant. In this matter he did not venture to speak for the landlords of Ireland. He had not had the opportunity, since the right hon. Gentleman sprang this proposal on the House, of consulting with any of them on the subject. But he was sure that there was no representative body of Irish landlords who would disagree with him when he said that he should most strongly object to any money grant being given, either out of the Imperial Exchequer, or the Irish Church Fund, or any public fund, for any such purpose. There was a very large number of tenants who, from their position, were quite incapable of ever being put back on their farms as ordinary tenants, or as purchasing-tenants, except by extraneous assistance; because, not being solvent men, it was impossible for the Purchase Commissioners to advance them sufficient money. The party who got them into their present trouble ought to get them out of it. It was said that the tenant farmers of Ireland owed a deep debt of gratitude to the evicted tenants who had fought the Plan of Campaign and the No Rent Manifesto. If that were so, let the tenant farmers show their gratitude by finding the money necessary to restore them to their holdings. He had always understood that there were funds at the disposal of hon. Members, below the Gangway, raised and available for this purpose. Whether those funds were adequate or not, it rested with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to find the money. As he told the right hon. Gentleman last year, the Evicted Tenant Question was settling itself. The re-enactment of Section 13 was well, but it did not greatly matter. Since the Evicted Tenants Bill of last year was rejected, a number of tenants on the Ponsonby Estate had been trying to make arrangements with the agent for reinstatement. Even since the present Bill had been in print, and since its provisions had been known, other tenants on this estate had come in, preferring reinstatement on conditions to be arranged with the agent, to waiting for the right hon. Gentleman's Bill. Since the Bill had been known, some tenants had come forward who had not come forward before; and, within the last few days, 20 of these men had been reinstated, even while the House of Commons was discussing the method of reinstatement. The hon. Member for East Clare had mentioned the Clanricarde Estate as one on which a great many evicted tenants had to be put back. What was the case in regard to that estate? He was not there to speak for Lord Clanricarde. He did not know him, and he had never spoken a word to him in his life; but he believed that he was a deservedly unpopular gentleman. But so far as his dealings with his tenants were concerned, Lord Clanricarde had been one of the most lenient men in the whole country. The gross rental of the estate was £23,000 a year. It was generally supposed that the Plan of Campaign had existed over the whole of the estate, but, as a matter of fact, only £2,400 of the rent was ever the subject of eviction, and out of that, the lands which had not been relet only represented £200. It might be interesting to hon. Members to hear that according to a statement in one of the Irish papers of Tuesday a tenant's interest at Portumna had been sold at 16 years' purchase, although the outgoing tenant owed 7½ years' rent. In conclusion he said the Bill bristled with contentious matters of all sorts and kinds, and therefore English, Scotch, and Welsh might rest assured that though a division might not be taken on the Second Reading, the measure would, in Committee, be hotly contested line by line.

Mr. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said he would not have intervened in the Debate at this stage but for the speech to which they had just listened. He regretted the tone of the hon. Gentleman's reference to the evicted tenants, for the hon. Member announced that he was determined to oppose most strongly any proposal to make a money grant from any source whatever to facilitate a settlement in the case of those unhappy men. [Mr. Smith-Barry: "From any public fund."] Was the hon. Gentleman prepared to make a grant himself for that purpose? The hon. Member objected to the clause in the Bill which had for its object the settlement of the evicted tenants' case on two grounds. In the first place he objected to the landlords of Ireland, even if they were willing to reinstate the evicted tenants, being compelled or asked to agree to a price at which the farm should be sold which should be settled by the Land Commission. Last year it was repeatedly stated on the Conservative and Liberal Unionist benches that some practical scheme should be framed for the reinstatement of the evicted tenants, and that if the Irish Members would consent to a voluntary arrangement such an arrangement would meet with no opposition from any quarter. The Irish Members were said to be irreconcilable and unreasonable; they would not, it was said, agree to a voluntary settlement. At the time he denied that he and his friends were irreconcilable and unreasonable.

*Mr. SMITH-BARRY said he had not stated that he objected to the reinstatement of the evicted tenants. What he said was that the 13th Section was an excellent section, but he was afraid that by the *addendum* the right hon. Gentleman would defeat his own object.

Mr. DILLON said the hon. Gentleman did not object to a section which long experience proved would not reinstate the evicted tenants, but he objected to a section which might reinstate the tenants at a fair and reasonable price. The hon. Gentleman objected to the price at which the evicted tenants should be put back being settled by an impartial tribunal, a tribunal which no one could pretend was likely to favour the evicted or any other tenants. He asked the House whether the attitude of the hon. Member for South Hunts was not proof of what the Irish Members said last year—namely, that there was no intention on the part of the hon. Member and those who sat round him to accept a voluntary settlement? The Irish Party would be glad to settle this burning question upon a voluntary system, but there must be two parties to a voluntary arrangement. Clause 13 was in operation for 12 months or more [Mr. T. W. Russell: "Six months."], and the Irish Party did their best to promote settlements under it. [*Laughter.*] He heard scornful laughter on the Tory benches. He would like to know whether any Tory Member gave any money towards settlements under Clause 13. The Irish Party out of their Party funds, which, he regretted, were not very superabundant at the present moment, did make such grants. It was impossible, however, to get the landlords to agree to terms which the tenants could possibly hope to fulfil. The hon. Member also objected to the re-instatement of the evicted tenants because the farms were in a state of dilapidation. [Mr. Smith-Barry: Because the tenants were insolvent.] Because the tenants were insolvent the Purchase Commissioners could not, the hon. Member said, advance the full price of the farms. Within two minutes the hon. Member swept away the whole of his own argument, because he boasted that at the present moment on the Ponsonby Estate, which was well known to be under his control, settlements were being arrived at. He abstained from informing the House as to the terms. Did the hon. Member believe that the Ponsonby tenants who were now out were insolvent men? [Mr. Smith-Barry: "Yes."] He believed they were insolvent men, and yet he had not hesitated to be a party to settlements based on what he (Mr. Dillon) called excessive prices. By his influence the hon. Gentleman had induced the Purchase Commissioners to advance the money of the British taxpayers to insolvent men. The hon. Member was quite willing to pocket the money and let the British taxpayers recover the advances as well as they could. What about the large number of Ponsonby tenants who settled two years ago? Those tenants agreed to purchase at 19 years' purchase. The hon. Member, or the committee with which he was identified had pocketed the money. They were all right; they had escaped responsibility, and the British taxpayer had to look to insolvent men, who, owing to some occult influence, had been enabled to borrow a great deal more than the true value of their farms, for the sums advanced. The Member for South Hants and the Marquis of Clanricarde might find it a very congenial occupation to squeeze their rents out of the starving Irish tenants, but if the unfortunate Ponsonby tenants had settled on terms which they could not fulfil, he believed the British taxpayer would be more soft-hearted than either of those gentlemen. The hon. Member shrank from the task of defending the Marquis of Clanricarde, but the case of that landlord had to be dealt with. What was the condition of things on the Clanricarde estate? It was now, and had been for ten years, a disgrace to this country. The hon. Member for South Tyrone proposed that a special Bill should be introduced for the expropriation of Lord Clanricarde. But if something were not legally done this year to settle the question of the evicted estates there would have to be a special Bill introduced next year to get rid of the difficulty. He would like to recall to the House the history of the Clanricarde Estate during the last 15 years, for he noticed that the memories of English Members in connection with Irish affairs were extremely short. In 1881 he attended a large meeting of the tenants of the estate at Portumna, at which a combination was formed to demand a reduction of 20 per cent. in the rent, which was a very moderate demand. Shortly afterwards he received word from the estate that the combination had broken down and that the tenants were paying their rents. He recollected very well being taunted in the House with the defeat he and his friends had suffered on the Clanricarde estate. He was accustomed to defeats in Ireland, but they always turned up again and won something in the long run. During the five years which followed the break-up of the tenants' combination on the Clanricarde estate which he formed in 1881 there were no public meetings, and there was no agitation on the estate, but during those years 11 men—including two agents of the estate—were murdered in the neighbourhood of Loughrea, and no one was ever brought to justice for the crimes. That was the result of the breaking-up of the tenants' combination of 1881; that was the result of the defeat with which he and his friends had been so often taunted. In 1886, at the earnest request of the Woodford Tenants' Defence Association, which had been formed on the estate in the preceding year, he once more went down to the estate, with considerable doubt and anxiety he confessed, and started the Plan of Campaign. What was the result? From the day the Plan of Campaign was started down to the present time no considerable outrage had been committed in the whole of South Galway. During the past three years, under the administration of the present Chief Secretary, Ireland had been reduced without coercion to a state of peace, unexampled for the past 50 years, although at the beginning of that *régime* the adjournment of the House was moved almost every week by Members of the Unionist Party to warn the country of the awful state of things which would prevail in Ireland if coercion were abandoned. But if Ireland was peaceable now owing to the absence of coercion and the hope in the hearts of the people that justice would be done them, that was no reason why the hon. Member for South Hants should sneer at the evicted tenants and at their sufferings, which during the last year had been cruel beyond the power of language to describe. These people were human beings. Were they to be ground into powder? If crime and outrage were again to follow discontent, the responsibility would lie on the shoulders of the hon. Member for South Hunts and men like him who turned a deaf ear to just demands, unless those demands were enforced by agitation and tumult. He had endeavoured honestly and earnestly to settle the evicted tenants' question in a way that would be reasonable. He had been willing, though a man of strong views on the subject, to make large concessions and to meet the landlords half-way. He had agreed that there should be public money voted to smooth the transaction. Yes, Irish money, and to what better purpose could such money be devoted? He had been willing—and this was a large concession for the Nationalist Members to make—that the prices of the evicted farms should be settled by a Commission appointed by a Unionist Government. In his judgment it would have been to the material interest of the landlords to have met the advances of the Nationalist Members in a reasonable spirit. But it was the policy and purpose of the landlords to have vengeance on the evicted tenants—to persecute and drive absolutely desperate by starvation the men who, in the opinion of four-fifths of the Irish people, had been the means of bringing about not only the present Land Bill, but the Land Act of 1891. Was it reasonable or fair, or in accordance with human nature, to expect that the masses of the Irish people would forget the men who, in their judgment, had been the means of getting the present Land Bill and the Land Bill of 1887 passed, or that they should calmly consent to see these men treated as insolvent tenants and left to starvation or the workhouse? They would not consent to any such thing, and they would regard those who opposed so moderate a clause as that in the Bill, which was directed to the case of the evicted tenants, as showing a cruel and vindictive spirit, whilst they were also taking upon their shoulders a serious and terrible responsibility. Turning to the main body of the Bill, he should like to say a few words on the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who had done a great deal of service to the Irish tenants on the Land Acts Committee. With many portions of the hon. Member's able speech he heartily agreed, but there were one or two points on which he strongly differed from him. The hon. Member, while cordially agreeing with the general propositions of the Bill, seemed to think that, if anything, it went a little too far in the direction of the tenants. He totally differed from the hon. Gentleman in that respect, and he would call his attention to a meeting of the constituents of the hon. Member for West Down, held at Banbridge on Monday last, and which was typical of many meetings which had taken place amongst the Unionist farmers of Ulster within the last few months. The Mem- for the West Down Division was invited to be present, but he wrote excusing himself on account of business. The meeting was attended by a number of Presbyterian and Church of Ireland Ministers, and from the names it was evident that it was in no sense a Nationalist meeting. One of the Resolutions passed was this—

> "That this meeting of West Down electors desires to thank Mr. John Morley for the attempt to embody in legislation the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Irish Land Laws, and approves generally of the Bill as an instalment of the just claims of the Irish tenants; that we call upon all Irish representatives, irrespective of their political opinions, and upon our representative, Lord Arthur Hill, in particular, to support the Bill as it now stands, with such amendments as are required ot protect the interests of the farmer."

These were the Unionists of Ulster who had been quoted over and over again as loyal men who would not think of doing anything dishonest. They were not ignorant southern and western farmers, but educated Ulster Loyalists who had studied the Bill and considered it to be an instalment of their rights. He could tell hon. Members from Ulster that this would be a serious question to them in the autumn if they did not obey the demands of their constituents. Did any man in the House suppose the hon. Member for North Armagh would calmly see the Bill pass the Second Reading if it were not for Resolutions of this kind? Some hon. Members had spoken in very violent language of the utter absurdity and incomprehensibility of the tenant's interest as apart from his improvements being taken into consideration as distinct from a fair rent. Here was a Resolution passed at the same meeting:—

> "Inasmuch as it has been proved that in the administration of the Act of 1881 there was on the part of the Land Commission neither a common understanding of the law nor anything approaching to uniformity of practice, we consider it essential in the framing of any fresh land law to clearly indicate the basis upon which a fair rent may be determined, having regard to the tenant's interest in his holding, the cost of production and yield, and the market value of the produce."

The Resolution went on to declare that improvements made previous to the year 1850 must be allowed to the tenant. That clearly demonstrated that the Unionist farmers of Ulster—for whom only the hon. Member for South Tyrone and the hon. Member for South Derry could speak in that House—considered the present Land Bill a most moderate Bill, and one which, in some particulars, required amendment in the direction of the protection of the farmers' interest. He agreed with that view. The Bill was a great improvement on its predecessors, and this was no doubt due to the fact that, while in the drafting of all previous measures the opinion of the representatives of the Irish farmers was totally ignored, in this instance the Chief Secretary had, upon the Select Committee on this subject of land legislation, a fair representation of those who spoke on behalf of the Irish farmers, to whose views he listened, and by which he was, no doubt, somewhat influenced. Some Conservative Members seemed to think that it was so utterly revolutionary and outrageous for the Chief Secretary to adopt such a course that this alone was sufficient to stamp his proposals with condemnation. It had come to be considered an outrage in some quarters if Irish Members were allowed to express their views upon a Bill before it was drafted. He gladly recognised that the Chief Secretary, by the Committee of last year, did give fair weight and consideration to the opinions of those who were sent by the Irish tenantry to represent them in that House. For that reason the right hon. Gentleman had produced a Bill which was vastly superior to its predecessors. So far from being an extreme and revolutionary measure, this Bill was, in his judgment, most moderate, and Irish Members would have to propose in Committee one or two Amendments in the spirit of the Resolution which he had just read out. Those Amendments would, he was certain, insure the support of the hon. Member for South Tyrone and other hon. Members. He would now touch on one or two points upon which he differed from the hon. Member for South Tyrone. One of these was the occupation interest. The hon. Member seemed inclined to throw discredit on the occupation interest, as an element for fixing the fair rent, and he said that he was willing to throw that element overboard, and he asked that it should, at all events, be made perfectly clear what was meant by the occupation interest. It was very difficult to convey to a body of Englishmen and Scotchmen—perhaps Welshmen would understand it better—what was meant by "occupation interest." It meant, in his judgment, that the Irish tenants held their land, not under contracts to which they never assented, but by old and immemorial custom, and that there exists in the Irish tenant an estate in a form similar to what the landlord possesses. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said that he fully recognised that in fixing a fair rent the occupying tenant should get a lower rent fixed than a stranger coming in as a tenant. But that was exactly what was meant by "occupation interest." It was, no doubt, an entirely unknown principle to an English landlord that a sitting tenant should be charged a lower rent because he was a sitting tenant as contradistinguished from another tenant coming into the farm. This was a very important and burning point in relation to this Bill, and he would like to direct the attention of the House to the course of some evidence which had been given on the subject. It was perfectly true, as the Member for South Tyrone said, that two or three of the witnesses who had been examined—Judge Neligan, of Cork, and Mr. Doyle in particular—had stated that they knew of no such thing as an "occupation interest," and that they were in the habit of fixing a fair rent at a figure which a solvent tenant, taking one year with another, ought to be able to pay for the farm. But that was the very reason why some definition must be laid down by law to drive the Commissioners in the future, and bring them into harmony. Several sub-Commissioners gave evidence directly the reverse of that given by Judge Neligan and Mr. Doyle. Mr. M'Afee, one of the most able of them, said that he always made a considerable reduction in favour of a sitting tenant, simply because he was a sitting tenant, and that, in addition to any allowance which he made for improvements. Mr. M'Afee's evidence was supported by four or five sub-Commissioners of great experience; and the evidence of all these was directly contrary to the evidence of Judge Neligan and Mr. Doyle. Therefore it appeared that a large section of the Commissioners were pursuing one course, while others were pursuing another and different course. This was a question of law. The first thing which an independent person, who might be sent by a humane and considerate landlord to value a property, would do, would be to ascertain the value to be charged on any income of the tenancy if the land were in the landlord's hands. Then, according to Judge Neligan and Mr. Doyle, that would be the fair rent. But Mr. M'Afee and others said that they fixed the rent, making a considerable reduction in respect of the fact that the farm was in occupation of a tenant, and they made that reduction before fixing the amount of the improvements. Was that a right condition for the law of the land to be in? Several of the witnesses were asked, for how much they would value for fair rent a farm which was in occupation, to the tenant in occupation, less than to a new tenant. Mr. M'Afee stated that the percentage was considerable, although he did not mention the exact rate. A very remarkable thing was this—that the representatives of the landlords brought up as a witness to support their cause Mr. Toler Garney, a well-known agent in the King's County, and, he must add, one who had anything but a savoury reputation. He was brought up because he was looked upon as a strong man, and yet he declared in his evidence that he would not charge the same to a sitting as to an incoming tenant. In view of this great discrepancy in the administration of the law in Ireland, were they to be told that the law was to be silent on this subject and no notice taken of it? The hon. Member for South Tyrone asked, "what do you mean by the occupancy interest? They did not mean—nobody outside a lunatic asylum would suggest—that the occupancy interest was to be estimated by the saleable right of the tenant. That was a preposterous suggestion. The occupancy interest was a well understood thing in Ireland; it meant the difference between the rent which would be fixed on a sitting tenant who had been, either through himself or his predecessors in title, in possession of the farm from time immemorial, and the rent which might be fairly fixed on an incoming tenant if the farm were in the hands of the landlord. That was the occupancy interest. He contended that it was quite as easy to estimate that interest as the fair rent. He therefore asserted that there was in the evidence the strongest possible proof that the occupancy interest was a reality, and that in a great number of cases—he should say more than half—which had been settled under the Land Acts it had been taken away from the tenant by those who had misunderstood the law. The hon. Member for South Tyrone made one very great mistake in his speech. He said he was inclined to minimise this question of the occupancy interest and he added——

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL denied that he minimised the occupancy interest, but he certainly minimised the question of the increased letting value; and he declared that he agreed with what the right hon. Member for Midlothian said in 1881 on the subject of the occupancy interest.

Mr. DILLON: But did not the hon. Member say that a sitting tenant was to get consideration as against an incoming tenant?

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he asked the Chief Secretary to say what he really meant by the occupation interest, and he put several alternatives to him. He could assure the hon. Member that the sum and substance of his argument about the occupation interest was this—that it was simply an asset conferred on the tenant by Act of Parliament which he could sell. But he denied that it had the slightest relation to the fixing of a fair rent.

Mr. DILLON replied that his recollection of the speech of the hon. Gentleman was that he said:—

> "If you mean by the occupation interest that a sitting tenant is to get consideration as contradistinguished from an incoming tenant, then I am heartily with you."

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I said he gets it now.

Mr. DILLON: Quite so. That is exactly my point. He gets it now.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Then, why do you want a new sub-section?

Mr. DILLON said, he could answer the hon. Gentleman, for, recognising that the hon. Member had been so useful on the Land Act Committee to the Irish tenants, he hoped the Irish Nationalist Party would be able to carry his able support throughout the discussions on this Bill. The reason why they wanted a new sub-section was explained out of the hon. Member's own mouth. An occupying tenant got a consideration as against an incoming tenant—that was to say, he got his rent fixed at a lower figure because he was a sitting tenant, and for no other reason. Yes; he got it from Mr. M'Apee and from several other Commissioners, but not from Judge Neligan and Mr. Doyle, and he wanted a definition because he wished the practice of Mr. M'Apee to be laid down as the practice of the Land Court. He denied that this question of the occupancy interest was first introduced to the committee by Judge Bewley. When he gave evidence Judge Bewley certainly said most emphatically — and it was an agreeable surprise to the friends of the tenants on the Committee—that the law as now administered recognised the occupation interest, and, lest there should be any doubt about it, he defined this as an interest which the tenants had in the soil quite irrespective of any improvements they had made, adding that that was recognised by the law in Ireland. But it appeared over and over again in the Blue Book that legal sub-Commissioners and County Court Judges had never heard of such a thing, and never gave tenants the benefit of it. In these circumstances a case was made out beyond all question for some definition in order to secure to the tenants in future the enjoyment of that which Judge Bewley said was at present the law of the land. In urging for a definition of the law which secured the interest of the tenant they were not advocating any revolutionary measure or innovation; they were simply asking that the law, as laid down by the head of the Land Commission and by one of the Judges of the Court of Appeal in Ireland, should be distinctly set forth in the Act, so that there might be no mistake about it. In connection with improvements the hon. Member for South Tyrone spoke of the increased letting value. In his judgment the term "unearned increment" was a very incorrect and misleading one The proper term for this particular point in connection with the Irish Land Act was "increased letting value." The question was neither so complicated nor so difficult to understand as many persons seemed to think. If a tenant rented a farm, or was in the enjoyment of a farm for a number of years at a certain rent, and if he executed work which increased its letting value say 50 per cent., was he to receive the benefit of the increased value, or was he only to get a percentage on the cost? That was the question which had to be considered. It was admitted by everyone that nineteen-twentieths of the improvements made in Ireland for generations past had been made by the tenants. It was further admitted that in the future all the improvements would be made by the tenants, for the landlords were now reduced to such a position that their representatives declared they would never make any more improvements. Where, then, was the justice of saying that there might be in the soil of Ireland dormant so-called "inherent capabilities" which might be aroused into value, if the landlords, left to themselves, would never do anything to obtain that increased value? If, on the other hand, the tenants by their exertions and at their own risk drew out those "inherent capabilities" of the soil, were they to be fined for doing so on their own capital and labour? A great deal had been heard about the surplus letting value. There were hundreds of thousands of farms in Ireland where the labour of the tenants had been applied to inhospitable soil, and from which they did not get 2 per cent., and in many cases 1 per cent., on their outlay. Half of his own constituency, for example, had been reclaimed by the ceaseless toil of generations of poor men. This was land which, if it had been reclaimed on commercial principles and as an investment, would be waste mountain and waste bog at this day. Was it fair to say to a tenant:—

> "If you lay out money and get only 1 per cent., or 2 per cent., or nothing, your money must go; but if you chance to get a stroke of luck and obtain 40 or 50 per cent., then the landlord is to say: 'You have developed the "inherent capabilities" of the soil, and therefore you must hand over all the profits to me beyond the interest on your outlay.'"

That was a monstrous proposition to be put forward on behalf of men who had contributed nothing to the work and to the advancement of the country. In considering the question, therefore, of the unearned increment, two considerations should be prominent—first of all, to think of the multitude of men who did not receive fair interest for the capital and outlay expended on the farms; and, secondly, to consider what was for the interest of the community at large as contra-distinguished from the interest of a small class. He maintained that it was enormously to the interest of the community at large in Ireland that everything should be done consistently with justice to encourage Irish farmers to lay out capital on their land and so to improve the condition of the country. The wealth of Ireland could be enormously increased if the people were properly encouraged to improve the land. He knew one estate where the tenants bought the land 10 or 15 years ago, and he was told that they could scarcely recognise the same district as compared with its former condition. The moment the tenants got possession of the land, and possessing the knowledge that every improvement they made would be their own, their spirit of enterprise and industry was evoked. That was what they wanted to encourage in Ireland. He was in favour of purchase as a solution of the Irish land question, but purchase must take a long time to produce effects. Consistently with safeguarding the just rights of the landlords, who, after all, were only rent-chargers, the House ought to aim under this Act to bring about this condition of things in Ireland on the farms of those who were still tenant-farmers. It was ridiculous to say that the landlords who were only too anxious to sell at 17, 18, or 19 years' purchase, and even less, were so eager about their share of certain alleged inherent capacities of the soil, so long as the rents of the farms as they stood were secured to them. He welcomed the clearing away of these cobwebs, because the system of holding over a farmer the idea that a portion of the improved value which he had given to his farm would be grabbed by the landlord had a dulling and deadening effect on the enterprise of farmers. They were not satisfied to be told that they would get sufficient interest on their outlay; they wanted to know that if they improved the value of their farms the landlord would not be able to step in and take away any of that value. There was another important consideration. Every member of the Select Committee was struck with the extraordinary complexity of the law and its uncertainty. It ought to be their desire in passing this Bill to make the law as simple as possible, and everybody could understand what was meant by saying that a farmer should get the benefit of all the increased value of his farm resulting from his improvement. But if they introduced the question of dividing the increased letting value between the landlord and tenant, according to some occult formula, based on the inherent capabilities of the soil, there would be no end to the difficulties that would arise. They had an example of the result of such a course in the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who stated that if the Land Commissioners took into account the inherent capabilities of the soil in valuing farms in Ireland the present rents would be doubled. That would be agreeable intelligence to the tenants of Ireland. He held it to be a matter of the highest policy, pending the final settlement of the Irish Land Question by a system of purchase, to do everything possible to encourage the Irish farmer to put his capital and labour into his farm; and the simplest and most straightforward way of doing that would be to give the farmer all the value he could add to his farm by the expenditure of that capital and labour. With regard to the question of reclamation, he could point to thousands of acres of land, which in its unreclaimed condition was not worth sixpence an acre, and which now, owing to the labours of the people, and without any expenditure on the part of the landlord, were let at 10s. and 15s. an acre. The Land Commissioners had said that it was impossible to go back upon old reclamations, but in these cases not only did the tenants lose the inherent capabilities of the soil, but they got nothing like a fair interest on their outlay. Thoughout East Mayo it would not have paid a man to reclaim a quarter of the land, and it had only been made available for the growth of human food, because the small holders there did not reckon their labour as capital. It was a remarkable and sad fact that, in Ireland, the richer the land the more moderate the rent in proportion to its value, and the poorer and more wretched the land the more extravagant and excessive the rent. It was most unreasonable and unjust that these poor reclamation tenants should be charged enormous rents because they were unable to prove their own improvements. Under the present Bill the Commissioners and valuers, in fixing a fair rent, would be justified in accepting evidence which, without being actually legal evidence, might absolutely satisfy them. He held that the tenants should get a fair value for these reclamations. With regard to the question of presumption, he could not avoid mentioning that the Report of the Devon Commission in 1845 said that, upon a review of the evidence furnished to them on the subject, they believed that some legislative measure would be found necessary in order to give efficacy to such agreements and to provide compensation for improvements, and earnestly hoped that the Legislature would be disposed to entertain a Bill of this nature and pass it into law. From that time down to 1887 not a single move was made to protect the improvements of the Irish tenants in the spirit of that recommendation. He would strongly appeal to the Government, and to the members of the Liberal Party, not to follow the bad precedents set by previous Parliaments; not to neglect and treat with contempt the views of those who were entitled to speak on behalf of the tenant farmers of Ireland; and, if they really desired to lay this question to rest—for some years at least—to insist that this Bill should pass as a comprehensive and full measure, and not to accept the Amendments which had been threatened from the Opposition Benches, which would minimise the good effects of the Bill. This was absolutely the first great Irish Land Bill which had been introduced into the House since the Act of Union which, had not been coupled with a Coercion Act. The people of Ireland had never seen the House apply itself to any proposal for moderating the condition of the Irish tenants and settling for a time the Irish land question, except upon the heels of a Coercion Act, until now. Ireland was peaceable and quiet to an extent hitherto unknown to this generation. He had read the other day that in Kerry, Limerick, Clare, Galway, and Roscommon, white gloves were presented to the Judges of Assize because there were no prisoners to try. The Bill was a most auspicious sign, and he trusted they would not take their hand from the plough to which they had put it; it would be impossible to exaggerate the profound effect which would be wrought on the minds of the people in Ireland, and upon the Irish race scattered all over the world, if this Parliament passed a great and beneficent measure to give justice to the Irish tenants, and, in spite of the Member for South Hunts, to restore the evicted tenants to their homes without agitation and crime in Ireland. On the other hand, if this great measure of justice was defeated, the effect on the people of Ireland—and he recommended this consideration to the Unionists—would certainly be most evil; and whatever might come in the future history of Ireland of disturbance, misfortune, or disaffection, the responsibility would entirely lie upon the shoulders of those who now, when they had no kind of excuse for their action, obstructed and resisted an honest effort to do justice to the Irish people.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Mr. Speaker,—Although the accident of the Debate has led to my following the hon Gentleman who has just sat down, I have no intention of following his argument step by step. It would lead me much too far from the line upon which I propose to address myself to the House. His standpoint and mine are entirely different. The hon. Member has dealt at some length with the history of the evicted tenants' question; he is now in a most conciliatory mood. He is also in a mood, not unusual with him, of great forgetfulness. The hon. Member said he was anxious for a settlement, and that he is ready to do anything in his power to promote the re-settlement of those tenants who have been evicted, entirely, as I think—mainly, as most people would say—in consequence of the action of the hon. Member and his colleagues. That is not the line the hon. Member has always taken. This is not the first opportunity he has had. This is a late repentance. In 1891 the 13th clause, of which the clause in the present Bill is substantially a repetition, was passed by the House. An offer was made to the tenants to replace them if they could agree, as owners of their holdings from which they had been evicted. What was the line then taken by the hon. Member for East Mayo?—

> "My advice," he says, "to the tenants is this: Be very slow to purchase your farms or have anything to do with the Land Act until after the General Election. Trust to your own exertions in your own localities. Abstain from taking these farms, and do not purchase at present."

Unfortunately they accepted the advice of the hon. Member, and now he comes down and expresses these views, denounces the landlords as being an unconciliatory lot of persons, and professes the utmost desire to secure for the evicted tenants the very provisions he advised them to reject in 1891. I have said that the standard of the hon. Member is different from mine. He says the tenants of Ireland have been driven by almost intolerable oppression and outrage to commit crime. I do not believe anything of the kind as regards recent years. But I believe even in recent years they have been driven to crime by the incentives which have been offered to them by the hon. Member opposite and some of his colleagues. He says—

> "This, forsooth, is a good time for dealing with this Bill. This is just the time—when you have Ireland in a state of peace and quiet which has not been known to the past generation."

To whom do we owe that? Have we to thank him? Sir, in October, 1894—only a few months ago, before this Bill was brought in—what was the advice the hon. Member was then giving to the tenants in Ireland? He makes here to-night a conciliatory, or, at any rate, a plausible, speech. That is for the House of Commons. We have had this over and over again from the hon. Member. But what did he say yesterday when he spoke to the tenants in Ireland; and to-morrow, when he leaves this House, will he use the same language and argument he thinks good enough for this House? He says:—

> "I tell you that if the Land Act is rejected by the House of Lords, it will not be the fault of the Irish Party or the fault of the Government who have introduced it and done their best to pass it. It will be your fault if you do not make Ireland a little warm during this autumn and winter."

Then the hon. Member comes down here, and because the tenants of Ireland, whom he has deceived, have found him out and, on this occasion, rejected his advice, and, because they have not made Ireland "warm" during the autumn and winter, he comes down here and takes credit for the peace of Ireland—an unusual peace during this generation. Sir, I have no sympathy whatever either with the spirit or method of the hon. Member, and in regard to this Bill my own view is not any different, I think, from the views which have been expressed as to its several provisions by my hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone. But I would point out to him that there is considerable difference between the net result of the criticisms which he has made of this Bill and the general description he has given of it. If the Amendments which my hon. Friend has suggested to-night should be accepted by the Government and made in this Bill, then, indeed, I should be prepared to say the Bill will be, if not a perfect Bill, at all events, a very different one from what it is at present. But I am not going to address myself to the imaginary Bill as it may be after the Amendments of my hon. Friend have been incorporated in it. I have to address myself to the Bill of the Government, and assume that they have carefully considered this question, and we—at all events on the Second Reading—have to take it in its present condition and upon that pass judgment. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary, in introducing the Bill, made a special appeal to me, because he said I was one of the Members of the Cabinet of 1881, the others remaining being the right hon. Member for Midlothian and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who passed the great measure of Land Reform of that year. He appealed to me as responsible for that, and said that, under the circumstances, he expected from me favourable consideration for the proposals intended to amend that Act and further the great object which my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian had in view. He said his measure was—

> "just and politic, and a strenuous effort to meet practical difficulties," and was "one to which a sober and responsible man should give impartial consideration."

I am much obliged to him for referring to me as a sober and responsible person. I think I know what he meant. He is a catholic-minded man, and he meant everybody except those who are tainted with any kind of sympathy with that discredited class—the owners of land. I think I come within his description. It is quite true I am a landlord myself. I have only one tenant and he does not pay any rent, although he makes frequent claims for compensation. As my tenant is my hon. Friend the Member for East Worcestershire, I do not think I am much prejudiced on either side of the question. I will say that if the Chief Secretary can justify the description he gave of this Bill he will find me among the most enthusiastic of his supporters; but he did not in his opening speech lead me to anticipate anything like this Bill. It is really altogether a misnomer to call this a Bill founded upon the Act of 1881. Why, it ignores the declared principle on which the author of that measure recommended it to the House. It destroys almost every one of the safeguards which he introduced to prevent the injustice he foresaw and deprecated. It seems to me to carry out the majority of the principles of the Land League, which my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian expressly repudiated, and which he said on that occasion, for his part, he was unable to distinguish from schemes of public plunder. What were the declared intentions of the promoters of the Bill of 1881? I felt then and publicly expressed the opinion I have always entertained that the only final solution of this land question will be some system of transfer of ownership from the landlord to the tenant. The occupier of land in Ireland must also be the owner if you are ever to end these perpetually recurring difficulties. That was the view I learnt from my late friend Mr. John Bright; it received confirmation again and again, and especially I recollect on one occasion in 1887, it did so from a high authority, Mr. Parnell. I venture to hope there is no disagreement as to that. But we felt in 1881, as my right hon. Friend says, that land purchase must take a long time. You cannot secure this great result over a whole country in a few months or years; and in the meantime some *modus vivendi* had to be found. The right hon. Member for Midlothian declared that he looked forward to a time when this measure would have done its work; when we might recur to a better and more natural state of things; when political economy, which had been temporarily banished to Saturn, would be amnestied and would revisit this earth. Accordingly he did not conceal from the House or from his supporters the danger attending the proposals he was making. He knew perfectly well that to interfere with freedom of contract, to fix rents by a legal tribunal, was a matter open to the gravest abuses; he did his best to prevent as much as possible the abuses which he foresaw; he distinctly laid before us the provisions, those exceptions and safeguards to which reference has been made, as calculated to prevent the abuses which he so greatly feared; and he said:

> "Take that Bill; with all its faults it is a less evil than the existing state of things."

Now, the object of the present Bill is to remove almost every one of the safeguards which were introduced in the Bill of 1881. I do not say that experience may not have shown that these safeguards are unnecessary or wrong; but we are bound to consider the proposals of the Government on their merits; and it is an absolute misnomer, an attempt to prejudice this question, to say that it follows the machinery of the Act of 1881, the authority of which it directly impugns. A man invents a locomotive. Someone says,

> "If you do not take care the boiler will burst, or the locomotive will run away."

He replies, "No, I have put in a safety valve and a brake." A few years later some one proposes to fasten down the safety valve and to jam the brake; and he says that that was the original intention of the inventor. That is the position of the Government. It is not merely that the principle of this Bill differs from the Act of 1881; but the spirit in which the two Bills were introduced is entirely different. My right hon. Friend quoted Mr. O'Connell as having said that crime in Ireland was due to iniquitous land laws. Suppose that were true; when did O'Connell say that? What has happened since? Even if it were true of the time of O'Connell, it cannot be true now, in 1895, after all the measures that have been passed. The hon. Member for Louth (Mr. T. M. Healy) laughs at my suggestion, and implies that the legislation in which we have been engaged since the time of O'Connell, from 1870 to 1891, has made no difference in the state of things, and that it is still open to him and his friends to say that crime in Ireland is due to iniquitous land legislation as it was in the time of O'Connell. What have we done in the interval? will the hon. Gentleman listen to the opinions of his colleagues? I know he has not much respect for the opinions of his colleagues, but here is the Member for Cork City. He says that in the interval—that is, since 1879—

> "there has passed over the face of Ireland a revolution which has secured to the Irish peasantry all that and more than the French Revolution secured for the peasantry of France";

and the hon. Member for Longford, in an address to Irishmen, said that

> "the powers of Irish landlordism, the powers of unchecked exaction and arbitrary eviction, which were the causes of indescribable wrong to the Irish people, have been shattered and destroyed."

They have been shattered and destroyed, and yet my right hon. Friend still appeals to the authority of O'Connell and allows the House to infer, as a reason for the introduction of this Bill, that the present state of Irish land is entirely due to the iniquitous character of the Irish landlords! That is quite a different spirit to the spirit in which the Act of 1881 was introduced. My right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian said in 1881, before the Act of 1887, and before the Act of 1891, that he disclaimed altogether the charge of iniquity which was sometimes brought against Irish landlords. He said it was an exaggerated charge. If that is true—and my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary will, I am sure, accept the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian — if that was true in 1881, still more is it true now, and I say it is unworthy of my right hon. Friend to introduce into this matter this appeal to prejudice and passion. Then, again, my right hon. Friend quoted from Sir William Gregory; but since the time when the oppression which Sir William Gregory described took place, we have altered the whole circumstances of the land in Ireland. A case of that kind cannot happen now. Therefore, what is the object of my right hon. Friend in referring to such a case in introducing this Bill, except it be to create prejudice amongst people who are ignorant on this matter? The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Midlothian, in introducing this Bill, appealed to the highest considerations of national policy and statesmanship; but my right hon. Friend has thought fit, on the contrary, when he knows that the only chance of success for the Bill is that it should be dealt with without party feeling and without party prejudice—my right hon. Friend has thought it necessary to speak with the voice of the Land League, with the voice of the hon. Member for Mayo. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, Mr. John Bright, and the late Mr. Forster, speaking on the Second Reading of the Act of 1881, expressed the belief that, while the Bill would enable the Land Courts to deal with exceptional cases of hardship and to reduce rents where gross exaction had been practised, yet in the great majority of instances it would not injure the landlords at all. It is rather curious to read these expressions of opinion and to contrast them with what has actually happened; and when so much is made of the intention of the promoters of the Act of 1881, it is surprising to remark the fact that on the result and operation of the Bill the intentions of the promoters have not been fulfilled—that is to say, that the operation of the Bill has been to reduce rents all over Ireland. I come now to consider, as briefly as I can, the provisions of this Bill. It is very difficult to deal with it in a Second Reading Debate, because each clause contains a separate principle. You might cut out half of the measure and still have a Bill of very considerable value. But I want to ask the House to drop the consideration of separate clauses and to think of the Bill as a whole. The main thing for us to look at is the general effect of the Bill, what is going to be its general operation, and I am going to take what is admitted to be the keynote of the Bill—namely, Clause 5. Clause 5 deals with improvements. The Act of 1881 laid down the broad principle that the tenant was not to be rented on improvements made by him and not paid for or otherwise compensated by the landlord. That is a fair principle, and nobody has objected to it in the slightest degree; but now let us see what is the extension that is going to be given to that principle under this Bill. Sub-section 2 defines as an improvement every expenditure of capital or labour which increases the letting value. It allows, therefore, good cultivation to come in as a ground for a reduction of rent. That is to say, if a man fulfils the ordinary conditions of his tenancy, for the non-fulfilment of which he would be punished, and for which deterioration would be claimed in this country, he is justified under this Bill in claiming a reduction of rent. Surely that is a perfectly monstrous proposal, which would not be entertained for a moment by any reasonable or fair-minded person. A man consents and contracts to farm his farm properly and well; and if he does not farm it badly he is invited under this Bill to apply for a reduction of the rent which he has agreed to pay on the condition that he farms the land well. The third section gives the whole additional value of improvements to the tenant when those improvements are due to his own expenditure or to the inherent capabilities of the soil. The fourth sub-section reduces the rent in consideration of the occupancy-right. Whatever may be the meaning and intention of my right hon. Friend himself, the meaning and intention of the the clause is, that in fixing the rent the valuer is to have regard to the occupancy right, which he must therefore value, and the deduction which he makes from the rent will depend upon the amount of that right, and that depends upon the sum which the tenant may have given for the goodwill of the farm. So, if the tenant has paid a *pretium affectionis*, if he has given 60 years' purchase, as some tenants have done, I believe, that is to be another ground for claiming a reduction of his rent. Under Sub-section 5 the landlord is to be debarred from pleading low rental or length of enjoyment as a set-off against reduction. Now, I ask the House to consider the cumulative effect of these provisions. The sixth Sub-section sweeps away the time limit, and allows compensation for improvements made, or alleged to have been made, up to the creation of man. Then the seventh Sub-section establishes the universal presumption that every one of these improvements, real or imaginary, has been effected by the tenant or his predecessor, although, as a matter of fact, the tenant who really made the improvements may have disappeared ages ago and the present tenant may not have paid a single penny for them. I will not apply the term "confiscation" to this Bill, but I will say that if it is logically interpreted in the Law Courts rent will absolutely disappear, for it will be reduced, not to "prairie value"—because I presume that prairie value is some value—but to no value at all. By a logical interpretation of these sub-sections you will arrive at a negative value, and, in course of time, I suppose a landlord will be considered a very bad landlord unless he pays a substantial sum to any tenant who will graciously consent to occupy his farm. I am not imputing to my right hon. Friend that he meant the Bill to have this effect; what I say is, that it will have this effect unless it is amended. Let me put this to the House. Take any land in Ireland at the present time. What was it 1,000 years ago? I suppose that in the majority of cases it was bog or swamp. What was its letting value then? Nothing. Everything that has given it a letting value since then is, under this Bill, to be presumed to have been done by the tenant or his predecessor, and therefore is to be deducted from the rent. In such circumstances, how can you arrive at any rent at all? This, I hold, is a mathematical demonstration, and, although it is a practical absurdity, that only justifies me in saying that the Bill requires large amendment. I said at the beginning that this was the doctrine of the Land League. What was that doctrine? As we read in the report of the Parnell Commission—[*Derisive Home Rule cheers*]—the object of the gentlemen who were brought before that tribunal was—

> "to promote agrarian agitation against all payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from Ireland the Irish landlords who were styled the English garrison."

What I want to point out is, that what the League proposed to obtain by coercion and intimidation this Bill will give by constitutional means unless it is altered. Let me ask the House to look at sub-section 3, which gives the whole increase in letting value to the tenant. I complain that the Chief Secretary either does not understand his own Bill, or speaks with two voices with regard to it. It seems to me that the speeches of my right hon. Friend on the Irish Land Question are affected by the principle of dual ownership. Sometimes he speaks with reason and moderation, and at other times he appears to speak the extreme doctrines of the Land League. He says that the whole increase of the letting value ought to go to the tenant, because the capacity of the soil was let to the tenant in his initial bargain, and that was accounted for in the fair rent. That is what I call the extreme view, and I say that it is inconsistent with another statement in the same speech. What the Bill says is not what my right hon. Friend says. The Bill says that the potential capacity of the land being accounted for, the whole of the letting value is to go to the tenant. The occupation-right, as described by my right hon. Friend in his speech on the Second Reading, involves, in my opinion, an absurdity, and it will have a result, whether he likes it or not, such as described. The Bill says you are to take into account the occupation-right, which is the goodwill of the tenant, and if you take that into account you must fix your deduction at the same rate as the interest upon the value. Whether it be 5 per cent. or 1 per cent., the principle is exactly the same. My right hon. Friend seems to have founded himself upon the *obiter dictum* of Mr. Justice Bewley that some of the Assistant Commissioners did take this right into account, not as a right. They did not take into account the occupation-right, but they did take into account the absolute concrete question whether the sitting tenant has been there for a long time or not. Somebody has said that that was all that he required to be taken into account, and that where a tenant or his family has been on the land from time immemorial he ought to have a lower rent fixed on his holding than the man of yesterday. I do not, on principle, see the force of that argument, but I wish to observe that it is a different thing from what is in the Bill. If you mean that, put it in the Bill; and if the only demand is, that some additional consideration shall be given to the old tenant, as compared with the new one, that at least—though I do not recognise it on principle—appeals to a sentiment which very likely this House would favourably consider. Only, I point out, unless you make this clear and define what you are driving at, if you leave in a reference to the occupancy-right, you will by that means ultimately destroy all rent altogether. It does not matter whether the deduction is small or large. Every decrease increases the occupancy value and therefore increases the demand at the next application. You destroy rent altogether. I will only mention, in passing, another sub-section, and that is the proposal to carry back the presumption beyond the memory of man. There is a practical question involved in that which I want to submit to my right hon. Friend. I think it is grossly unfair to take the presumption back so far as that, and I can conceive of a number of cases in which it would be a great injustice to the landlords. But even in the interest of the tenant I do not think it desirable to encourage possible claims of this imaginary description. If you do it is perfectly certain you will enormously add to the litigation and claims that would come before the Court, and I believe it would be in the interest of simplicity and therefore of economy that some limit of time should be fixed. If that limit is fixed, as it was fixed in the Act of 1870, at the year 1850, that would be a limit 45 years behind the the present time, in which the vast majority of improvements will have been practically exhausted; and really there cannot be anything of great importance which can practically substantially exist as a claim behind that time. I approve generally of the second clause, which deals with the exclusions, though I think there may be some room for amendment and criticism in Committee. I admit there does not seem to be sufficient reason for keeping all these clauses out of the Act, only I would remind my right hon. Friend that by this provision you are introducing a number of new claimants, and when you couple with that the principle of shortening the statutory term, and breaking the statutory term in the case of all tenants whose rents have been fixed within the last ten years, and the reinstatement of the evicted tenants as present tenants, you are immensely increasing the work in the Courts and enormously adding to the already great cost of litigation unless you do a great deal, more than I am afraid my right hon. Friend proposes, to simplify procedure. I do not think that when we come to the Committee stage the question of procedure will deserve more attention than up to the present time the Government have been able to give it. I will not argue the matter of pre-emption as I had intended, but I will ask my right hon. friend to look to the Debates in 1881, and to see what the Member for Midlothian said in regard to this particular clause. He said in effect that nothing could be more absurd than to allow restrictions upon competitive rent if you allowed competitive tenant-right unlimited extension, and he regarded sub-Section 3 in Clause 1 of his Act as tending to prevent this unlimited extension of tenant-right. I know my right hon. Friend says it has not fulfilled its object, but although that may be a reason for making it more stringent, it is certainly no reason for repealing it altogether. Before sitting down let me go back to what I said at first. My view is, that the one proper and final solution of this matter is land purchase; and one of my great objections to this Bill is, that it makes land purchase more difficult and throws increased obstacles in the way. By this Bill you are increasing the uncertainty of everything that concerns land purchase in Ireland. You are doing more than that.

You are throwing doubt upon the past. What do you think is going to be the effect upon those persons who have purchased land if you are going to produce legislation, the result of which is to make a further considerable reduction in rents? Will it not bring upon you from those tenants who have purchased a universal demand for some reduction of the purchase price which they have paid? But one thing is certain. The tenant is a shrewd person, and he will not go into the Courts to buy so long as he believes there is an element of uncertainty as to what his ultimate rent is to be. He is not such a fool as to buy in a falling market, and unless, therefore, you introduce some kind of finality into your proceedings you will never carry out this great operation of land transfer, which everybody agrees is most desirable and most important. I want to make one suggestion to my right hon. Friend before I sit down. I want to ask him to consider between now and the Committee stage whether, at the time he is dealing with this question of land, he cannot do something as well for land purchase. Can he not, for instance, simplify the procedure with regard to land purchase and with regard to the guarantees which are demanded? I am told that some of those guarantees are unnecessary, and that they are not only unnecessary, but that they do act as a deterrent. If that be so, I hope my right hon. Friend will consider the question and see whether or not it may not be possible, with the experience which we have gained, to facilitate the transactions under that Act. But I am going much farther than that. I say this Bill is going to perpetrate the land war in Ireland. Every ten years under this Bill you will now bring every tenant in Ireland and every landlord in Ireland into sharp conflict, probably before the law. It cannot be otherwise. At the same time you will subject this country to enormous additional cost. As my right hon. Friend has already told the House, in the years since 1881 we have spent £1,000,000 endeavouring to deal with this question, and I say that was not the intention of my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian. When he brought in his Act he contemplated a better result than this. Even now, if we are going to legislate again after having, as hon. Members opposite say, "shattered the power of the landlords," we might say to the landlords and tenants:—

> "We have interfered in your affairs and have spent a million in order to fix rents and to settle your respective interests. In many cases we have failed to do justice, though we have tried to do our best, and if we try again it is doubtful whether we shall do better. What we propose now is, that if either of you is discontented with the present state of things, and if you come before the Courts for revision, in that case the other party shall have the right to say, 'We cannot agree. We are continually disagreeing. I am tired of this perpetual warfare. Our partnership is not a success, let us end it.'"

Thereupon the Land Court should intervene and settle the transfer. That is my suggestion. It is a scheme of limited compulsory purchase. It is limited, in the first place, by the number of applicants who may come into Court; and, in the second place, by the amount of money with which the Court may be provided by this House. I believe that a scheme of that kind would suffice to deal with most of the urgent and bitter contests which may arise in this matter, and that it would give a large extension to this principle of purchase which we desire to see made universal. I have shown that the Bill does not, in its present form at any rate, carry out the intentions declared by my right hon. Friend, and that it does not justify his description. It is not a moderate Bill, nor is it founded on the principles of the Act of 1881. On the contrary, it will, unless amended, bring about results which the promoters of the Act of 1881 all of them publicly disavowed. On the other hand, I agree that there is much in the Bill that is good. It is difficult to discuss it on a Second Reading, and one must approach it with mixed feelings, for while there are some things which are good, and others which may be good but which require explanation, there are others which are absolutely bad. I do not know with what intention my right hon. Friend introduced the Bill. If it is only part of an electioneering programme, let him closure Debate in Committee as soon as he can, and get it out of this House. We know then what its fate will be. [*Ironical cheers.*] Certainly. If a Bill in this form were to go to the other House, that House would undoubtedly be failing in its duty if it did not give the same treatment to the Bill as to the Home Rule Bill But I do not believe that that is my right hon. Friend's intention. I believe he wants to pass a good Bill, and I hope that he will treat with consideration the amendments and suggestions which are submitted to him. If he does that, I do not see any reason why a Bill dealing with the practical difficulties to which he has referred should not be passed, not only through this House, but through the other. But if the Bill is treated as a measure on which no amendments are to be allowed, then, though I do not vote against it on this occasion, I shall certainly oppose it on the Third Reading.

Debate adjourned.

## REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (CHANNEL ISLANDS CHILDREN) BILL.

Im moving the Second Reading of this Bill,

*THE UNDER SECRETARY of STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds) said, that the Bill, which was agreed to by the Legislatures of the Channel Islands, provided for the transfer to the reformatory and industrial schools of England of children ordered to be removed to such schools by the Courts of the Channel Islands. As far as he knew there was no objection to the Bill on any ground.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) asked whether the charge for maintenance of the children in the schools would be borne by the authorities of the Channel Islands.

MR. G. RUSSELL: Yes, Sir.

Bill read 2°.

## METROPOLITAN POLICE (RECEIVER) BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Bill be now read a second time."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked that some explanation should be given of the provisions of the Bill.

*MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, this Bill was only intended to provide for the appointment, if necessary, of a substitute or deputy for the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police during the Receiver's temporary absence through illness or any other cause. At present there was no means of providing a deputy, and both receipts and expenditure on behalf of the Metropolitan Police Fund had to be authenticated by his signature. There was now no official qualified to sign for him.

Motion put, and agreed to.

## SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE, 1895.

*MR. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) rose to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty that Sections 3 and 4 of Part II. of the Scotch Education Code, 1895, be withdrawn until further time has been given for considering the provisions as to Queen's students."

He said, he owed an apology to the Speaker and to the House generally for causing a prolongation of the Sitting at that late hour, but his excuse must be found in the circumstances of the case. This was the only opportunity which could be taken of discussing the Scotch Education Code for that year. That

Code contained important new provisions—especially some relating to the training of teachers—which would have deserved the consideration of the House even if there had been nothing in them calling for criticism or requiring explanation. But those provisions had raised not a little anxious criticism in Scotland. Deputations on the subject had waited on the Secretary for Scotland. Representations had been made by University authorities; and he had today presented a petition from the General Council of the University of Glasgow. Under these circumstances he trusted he should be excused by the House for the action he was now taking. He said at once that he did not propose this Motion in a sense hostile to the principle of the Code in making new provisions for the training of teachers. What he ventured to say was that the Code in itself and in the light of the circular which accompanied it, was calculated, unless satisfactorily explained, to awaken grave apprehensions as to its effect upon the existing Training Colleges—which were acknowledged to have done excellent work in the past—and apprehensions also as to its effect upon the Universities, with respect to the standard of teaching in the Arts classes. The Code proposed to add to the present means of preparing teachers, that candidates for the profession, to be called Queen's students, should attend a University or University College, under the authority of a local committee, who would be responsible for their discipline and moral supervision, for their regular attendance at professorial lectures, and for their practical training in a school approved by the Department. To this idea of connecting the preparation of teachers more closely with study at a University, there was nothing but approval expressed by all interested in education. He thought the right hon. Baronet, the Secretary for Scotland, deserved the thanks of all Scottish educationists for putting so prominently forward this connection of University education and the Teaching profession. They especially felt the importance of this development at the present time, when greater efforts were being made for the promotion of secondary education—requiring highly qualified teachers for their secondary schools, and for the higher departments of ordinary public schools. But how did the Code, as explained by the Circular, propose to carry out this idea? The Circular spoke of—

> "Allowing the whole training to be taken in connection with the University;"

giving the impression that the University was in some way to have to do with all that had hitherto been done by the Training Colleges. And, again, when professional and technical training was referred to, the same impression was encouraged; for it was said that—

> "The Universities will now have an opportunity of taking a share in the work,"

that was, of professional and technical training, "along with the training colleges." Here, then, there appeared to be the introduction of the Universities as competing with the Training Colleges in work proper to the Colleges, but not proper to the Universities. It was no wonder, he thought, that the committees of the Training Colleges took alarm lest they should be deprived of their students. How could they doubt that the dignity of being termed Queen's students, with attendance at University classes, under the easier supervision of a local committee, would be more attractive to the young people who had just completed their course as pupil teachers, than to become Queen's scholars under the stricter and more continuous discipline of a Training College? And the friends of Training Colleges were not alone in this opinion. Those who upon theoretical grounds are objectors to, or opponents of, the Training Colleges, took the same view. The publication of the Code made them jubilant, because they thought they saw in the new proposals the doom of the Training

Colleges. And how did the matter look as viewed from the position of the Universities? Besides being called upon to join in a work which lay outside of their province, the Universities were to be invited to receive for instruction in subjects which were within their province a new class of imperfectly prepared men who should nevertheless bear the name of Queen's students. As to the preparation required for students entering the Universities, there had been an important step taken in Scotland in recent years. Ordinances had now become law which required that all students who went forward to graduation, or who entered the University with a view to graduation, should pass a certain preliminary examination or an equivalent to it, and the Universities desired that such students only should be encouraged to come within their walls. This condition, however, of passing an examination was not to be imperative, for the present at least, in the case of Queen's students. Their exemption was stated as a temporary provision, but no date was given for its removal. Those Queen's students, therefore, who did not pass the examination would attend the University as private students. Their presence there would not be very profitable to themselves if they were not sufficiently prepared to derive full benefit from the instruction given, and their presence would have a rather depressing effect on their fellow students. Their attendance would have no recognition by the University, and yet their name of Queen's students would give them a *quasi* University status in the eyes of the uninformed. It might be replied that Queen's scholars of the Training Colleges who attended University classes, as many of them did, were not required to undergo this preliminary examination; but, in answer, it had to be remembered that they were not allowed to attend the University unless they had attained a certain stage in the Training College, proving their fitness to profit by the University classes; and besides, they were, after all, only Queen's scholars—they had not the misleading title of Queen's students. The only safeguard against the evil to which he had referred was the discretion of the local committees, who ought, of course, to refuse their sanction to any Queen's student going forward to a University class who had not first proved his ability to profit by it; but having no information yet as to how these committees were to be constituted, they could scarcely say how far their discretion was to be trusted. A more certain ground of confidence was found, he thought, in a Memorandum just issued by the Principal of the University College of Dundee. He believed he might say it was an open secret that the appearance of these new provisions in the Code at this time had been largely owing to the desire expressed by educationists in Dundee (where there was at present no Training College), for some means of preparing teachers in that important centre. With that desire he had fully sympathised. He only regretted that in the way in which it was met in the Code there was, in appearance at least, an endangering of the good work done at present in other parts of the country. But Principal Peterson explained the views of the Council of Dundee University College in a way which appeared to him to be quite satisfactory. He said :—

> "The essence of the Dundee proposal is to found a Normal Training Department which shall do for this district what is done by the Training Colleges in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen."

And he said further :—

> "It is not University College, as a part of the Scotch University system, that is here in question."

In other words, for students not prepared to profit by University teaching, Dundee College would have a Normal Training Department. Such students would be under instruction in the College as a separate institution of itself—not as a part of the Scottish University system. One could only regret that these young men and women were to receive the name of Queen's students, before they entered the University as students passing on to graduation. For students who could pass the preliminary examination he thought there would be general satisfaction in Scotland with the proposals of the Code. He believed that the Secretary for Scotland would say there, as he had said elsewhere, that which would go far to allay the fears which the Code as introduced had undoubtedly raised. It was in order to give the right hon. Gentleman that opportunity that he begged to propose the Motion which stood in his name.

SIR C. DALRYMPLE seconded the Motion.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) thought that the Department might congratulate themselves on the way in which the Code had been received. It contained, no doubt, changes and improvements, and it was impossible to please everybody. His hon. Friend, while generally praising the Code, expressed fears at what was, perhaps, the most important change in it. The late Government, in the year 1890, carried through a considerable, and, he thought, a very beneficent change in England, by allowing local committees to be started in University towns, and those local committees, which were of exactly the same nature and described in the Code in exactly the same language as those now proposed to be started in Scotland, were allowed to undertake the training of students in conjunction with the University or the College. To each of those students sums of money were paid. This was taken advantage of in many centres of education. In Wales especially it had caused a revival in University education as extended to the masses. In England and Wales there were now 871 students of these classes, of whom 436 were men and 435 women. The system had been a complete success, and England and Wales received considerably upwards of £20,000 a year from the public Treasury. Would Scotland remain any longer behind in this respect? The Department had extended to Scotland exactly the same advantages as were extended to England, but stronger guarantees were taken in the case of Scotland, because, in order that the most remote fear of lowering the University standard should be removed in Scotland, a condition was imposed by which each of those students had to have obtained a University mark of several passes of credit in one or another of the subjects of the examination for Queen's scholars. He had information that there was great need of trained teachers in Scotland. Out of 8,700 teachers, upwards of 2,500 were untrained, and he was very much afraid the numbers were increasing, because, out of 600 teachers who entered this year, 200—or, full one-third—had received no special training. In the other great centres there were Training Colleges, but in Dundee none; but, on the other hand, in Dundee there was a great desire on the part of young people to become teachers. The University College had long been anxious for the advantages that had been given since 1890 to England, and the local authorities of the town, the School Board and the Municipality asked that Dundee should be made a real centre for training, and another species of training from that of any Training Colleges which now exist. It was said that this would lower University teaching. Why in Scotland, if not in England? These Queen's students were not to have a degree at the University. They were to become teachers. Instead of having their degree at the end of their course, they were to pass an examination which was to be conducted by the Universities and by the local committee—an examintion of the same nature as certificated teachers pass when they come to the end of their career. The argument about lowering the standard of University teaching was not a good one in Scotland. When they considered in old days the trouble which Scottish parents took, the sacrifices they made to send their children to the University under the greatest disadvantages, he did not think they should be too ready to say that humble students ought not to attend the University. That was not all. The young men from the Training Colleges might go to the classes now without passing a preliminary examination; but they had to take the University mark. That was exactly what should have every opportunity and facility afforded them of going to the University. He was glad to see that in they proposed for the Queen's students—to place them on the same footing as those who now went to the Training Colleges which now existed, and he could not consent to place them in a less advantageous position. It was said that there was an unfair competition with the Training Colleges. That was not so. The average payment on account of the Queen's students was £32 10s. per year, and the average payment to the Training Colleges was £32 12s. He should like to refer to an important Memorandum laid before him by the deputation from the Training Colleges. Speaking in a much stronger tone than his hon. Friend, they protested against this proposal, in the first place, because it was a proposal uneducational, undesirable, and retrograde. On the contrary, he said it was a progressive and desirable proposal, and as it had been a real success in England, it should be extended to Scotland. Then it was said that the proposal "is wholly superfluous and unnecessary." But as Minister for Education in Scotland, he received on the other side complaints that the supply of teachers was steadily falling off. Again it was pleaded that—

> "It would gradually destroy existing institutions. . . . Training colleges would come to an end in a few years, and the Churches would give them up."

This system, however, had succeeded in 15 centres in England, and the Training Colleges had expressed no apprehension. Then came the most important objection that no provision was made for the religious instruction of students intending to be teachers. The Government did not lay down any obligation that religion should be taught, and he thought quite rightly so, because it was not the business of the State. As no obligation was laid on the Training Colleges in Scotland with reference to the teaching of religion, no obligation would be laid on the local committee; but could anyone believe that a committee formed of representatives of educationists, municipalities and Universities would really start an institution for the training of teachers in which there was to be no teaching of religion? To the contention that the teachers of the young could not be taught religion except in a college attached to a special denomination, he, as an individual Member of Parliament, could never possibly accede; neither as an administrator could he consent for such a reason as that to forego for Scotland an advantage which had been enjoyed by England since 1890. The object of the Department was to make this new step a success, and in order to do so they proposed to observe two conditions. In the first place, they did not intend to force the scheme upon anybody who did not want it. If a University College wished to take part in the system and it placed itself in communication with the School Board of the city in which it was placed and with the municipality, and made a solid local committee to which they could safely intrust the welfare and the guidance of the young people, the scheme would be put in operation. But, on the other hand, when they had a body like that at Dundee which already was prepared to come forward, the Department wished that that body should set the new system in motion under such conditions that it might be successful, and that that body should not be hampered in any way in comparison with the existing training colleges. The Department would watch the system most carefully, and see whether it wanted relaxing or tightening in any respect to make it a success or to prevent it from being a danger; but he could not consent, under any circumstances, to go back from the proposal of extending to Scotland an advantage which appeared to him to be peculiarly adapted to Scotch requirements, to Scotch character, and to Scotch educational conditions.

MR. J. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) did not think anyone could challenge the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that there was great need of fresh and additional teachers in Scotland, and that it was desirable those teachers a good many respects the Code made more attractive in one way or another the profession of the teacher and facilitated the training to fit him for his profession. But the great claim the right hon. Gentleman put forward was that the Code was to add largely to what Scotland drew from the Treasury for the purpose of training. He did not see where that came in except in one particular case; Dundee wanted an opportunity of training teachers. It was quite right Dundee should have that chance. By all means let the University College of Dundee have every opportunity of training as many teachers as it could. That was wanted, and no one would grudge that to Dundee. But he would like to know what chance there was that the other Universities of Scotland would fall in with the plan of the right hon. Gentleman. What were they to gain by it? They could gain nothing under the Code except in regard to teachers who remained in a course of training for a third year unless they formed a local committee. What form of local committee were they to have? The right hon. Gentleman had said he did not intend to force a local committee on anyone who did not want it. He was glad of that; but what sort of local committee would there be? Supposing, for example, that in Glasgow the training colleges now existing, together with the University and the School Board, desired to form themselves into a local committee. Of course the Department would have to judge of the fitness of the local committee. Would that he had mentioned be the kind of local committee the right hon. Gentleman would approve of? Would the right hon. Gentleman in that way give Glasgow and Edinburgh and Aberdeen a chance of benefiting by the scheme? The great objection that was felt to the scheme as it stood was that it admitted to the University students of too low a standard. The language that the right hon. Gentleman used about humble students seemed to him wide of the mark. It was not a question of the humbleness of the student, but of his fitness to benefit by University teaching. Just lately in the Scotch Universities they had made a great step in advance by imposing a preliminary examination. He contrasted the tone of the circular of the Education Department with that now used by the right hon. Gentleman. He quite agreed with the view expressed in the circular, and that was the view which had been expressed strongly by the University of Edinburgh, the Educational Institute, and by various training colleges. It appeared to him that to go back on the step they had just introduced of having a preliminary examination was unnecessary to prevent what was an evil to Scotch Universities in times past, viz., that they contained students whose knowledge was so elementary that they could not benefit by their position in the Universities, and who ought rather to be taught in schools. That would be a very great flaw in what otherwise he should consider a great improvement to the scheme. He did not think it was correct that under this scheme the Queen's students were to be exactly on the same footing as the Queen's scholars, because the Queen's students were, when they passed in the first or second class, to be admitted to University lectures, while the scholars only got their fees paid when they passed in the first class. The Queen's scholars who had passed the first class were on the whole undoubtedly fit to benefit by University training. He thought it would be bad for Universities, and also for students, that they should encourage people whose training and knowledge was not sufficient to benefit by the University to go there; they ought to leave them to be dealt with in other institutions such as training colleges, schools, and University colleges which did not give a degree. The education of all these more backward students ought not to be thrown on the University. On the whole, the extension of the supply of teachers and the association of teachers more closely with the Universities was a thing that would be welcomed throughout Scotland. He only regretted that there were the drawbacks he had mentioned in regard to it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at Twenty-two minutes before One o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Friday, 5th April 1895.*

## EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND) ACT, 1885.

Scheme for the management of the Banks Endowment Eyreount: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. [No. 67.]

## TREATY SERIES, No. 8 (1895).

Agreement between the Governments of Great Britain and Russia with regard to the spheres of influence of the two countries in the region of the Pamirs; London, 11th March 1895: Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

## LIFE INSURANCE.

Tables of the premiums to be charged under contracts for the insurance of lives, together with a statement of the rules observed in constructing them: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

## ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

House in Committee according to Order): Bill reported without amendment: Standing Committee negatived: Then Standing Order No. XXXIX considered (according to Order), and dispensed with.

Bill read $3^a$, and passed.

## SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

Amendments reported (according to Order).

## LEGISLATION BY REFERENCE.

**THE LORD CHANCELLOR** (Lord HERSCHELL) moved—

"That a Committee of five Lords be appointed to join with a Committee of the House of Commons to consider in what manner such inconvenience as arises from Legislation by reference in Acts of Parliament to prior enactments can best be avoided; that the Lords following be members of such Committee:—The Lord Chancellor, the Marquess of Salisbury, the Earl of Morley, Lord Halsbury, and Lord Thring; that such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a Chairman."

Then a message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to acquaint them therewith, and to request them to appoint five Members of that House to be joined with the said Committee pursuant to the Resolution of this House of Friday last, and to the message of the House of Commons of yesterday, signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution.

## GRAND JURIES (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Read $3^a$ (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

## EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL CASES (No. 2) BILL [H.L.]

Read $3^a$ (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Friday, 5th April 1895.*

The House met at Ten minutes after Two of the Clock.

## GREAT SOUTHERN AND WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Order for Third Reading read, and discharged: Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House in respect of Clause 15; considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered.

**MR. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) said, that if it were possible, as he had got the consent of the promoters, he would now move the Third Reading.

***MR. SPEAKER**: The Bill must be considered first.

## GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for Third Reading,

***MR. CYRIL DODD** (Essex, Maldon) said, he had no special complaint against this company, but he wanted to know, now that it came to ask for further powers, whether the company had in any way laid itself open to special complaints on the part of the Board of Trade, either with regard to railway rates or hours of servants.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, he did not know for certain what the hon. Member meant by special complaints, but he was not aware of any matter in respect of which he could draw any difference between this company and other companies, and say that that Bill ought to receive different treatment.

Bill read 3°.

### LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY BILL.

On the Order for Third Reading,

MR. D. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon District) said, that, inasmuch as the Welsh Members were desirous of raising a Debate on the general policy of the London and North Western Railway Company in North Wales, in connection with the Bill, he would suggest that the Debate on the Third Reading should be postponed until after Easter.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member has agreed with the promoters of this Bill that the Third Reading should be postponed until after Easter it is competent for that arrangement to be come to; but I do not think it would be competent for the hon. Member upon the London and North Western Railway Bill, or upon any particular railway Bill, to raise the general question of the policy pursued by a railway company. That has been ruled out of Order before, and I should rule it out of Order in the case of a Bill introduced at the time of Private Business. Of course, if the hon. Member wishes the Bill put off and objects to it, it must be put off from today, and, by arrangement it can be put off until some future day which the hon. and learned Member may agree upon with the promoters.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Will it be competent with me to move that it be put off to Monday fortnight?

*MR. SPEAKER: The best course would be for the hon. Member to put it off to a less remote day than that. Perhaps if it were put off until Monday some arrangement might be come to with the promoters to have the Third Reading at a later period.

Bill put down for Monday next.

### LIFE INSURANCES.

Copy presented,—Of Tables of the Premiums to be charged under Contracts for the Insurance of Lives; together with a Statement of the Rules observed in constructing them [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### KILLYBEGS PIER.

MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been drawn to the resolution unanimously passed recently by the Grand Jury of the County of Donegal relative to the delay upon the part of the Government in carrying into effect the undertaking given so long since respecting the construction of a deep water pier at Killybegs; and, whether the Government have yet sufficiently considered the matter as to hold out the hope that the necessary work will shortly be proceeded with?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am afraid I cannot at present supplement the reply given to a somewhat similar question addressed to my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury on the 26th March by the hon. Member for South Donegal.

MR. DANE said, the Chief Secretary had been good enough to send him a copy of the answer which was given by the Secretary to the Treasury on the 22nd of March last, to a question in reference to the proposed pier at Killybegs, and he was very much obliged to him for it. In that answer the Secretary to the Treasury stated that one of the reasons for delaying the erection of the pier was a question of funds, and he would like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Congested Districts Board would be prepared to pay over the balance. He understood there was a meeting of the Board, of which the right hon. Gentleman was the Chairman, on the 15th of last month, and he wished to ask him what took place at that meeting, and whether they had before them a copy of the resolution of the Grand Jury of the County of Donegal?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am afraid I cannot answer that question off-hand, and I am not quite sure what light it would throw upon the matter. I shall be in Ireland in a few days, and there will be another meeting of the Congested Districts Board on Friday or Monday. Perhaps, after the recess, I may be able to give the hon. Gentleman some further information.

Mr. MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that not merely unrepresentative and irresponsible bodies like the Grand Jury were clamouring for the completion of this work, but that there was a very strong feeling on the subject amongst representative bodies?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am well aware of all the circumstances of the case.

## PRISON CLERKS.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether candidates for the situation of prison clerks were required to undergo the Civil Service examination, and whether, pursuant to the notice in the *London Gazette*, of the 9th September, 1879, they were charged the examination fee of £3; whether the fee charged is, as recently stated by the Secretary to the Treasury, according to a scale proportioned to the maximum salary attainable in the ordinary course of promotion; whether the examination fee of £3 corresponds in the scale to a maximum salary of £400 to £450; whether certain of the prison clerks who entered under the scale are debarred from any further increment after attaining to a salary of £150 after 15 years' service; and, whether, considering the expectations which were practically held out to the candidates for these posts, and the improbability that equally qualified men would compete for posts with a maximum of £150, he can see his way to redress the inequality between them and the members of the other branches of the Civil Service.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. Asquith, Fife, E.): The answer to the first and third paragraphs is in the affirmative. The answer to the second paragraph is that, in the view of the Treasury (and it is that department, and not the Home Office, which is responsible in the matter), the fee has no relation to the rate of promotion in the particular department; still less to the chance of a particular clerk attaining the maximum to which it is proportioned; but depends on the maximum value of posts to which the persons passing the examination can be promoted without obtaining a further certificate. In the case of the prison clerks there were, and are, such posts in the Home Office of which the salary is as high as £450. As to the 4th paragraph, it is true that the salary of clerks of the second class cannot, so long as they remain in that class, rise above £150. I regret that, owing to the disuse of certain of the prisons and to other causes, there has been a block in promotion which has kept in the second class some clerks who might by this time have expected to be in the first. But large promotions took place from one class to the other in 1891, and I fear I cannot do anything further to improve their position.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether the notices issued by the Treasury stated that the maximum salary for those who paid £3 examination fees would be £400 to £450?

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes, that is true.

## ARTISANS' HOUSES AT MULLINGAR.

Mr. J. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, can he state the reason why the Irish Board of Works are delaying the advance of £1,100 to the Mullingar Town Commissioners for the erection of six artisans' houses (Scheme 4), the Local Government Board having sanctioned the loan on 9th January last.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): I understand that the Board of Works have called on the Town Commissioners for a statement of the title of the premises on which it is proposed to build the houses referred to. As soon as this statement has been furnished, no time will be lost in proceeding with the case.

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, DUBLIN.

Mr. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, if his attention has been directed to the inadequacy of the building used by the Royal College of Science in Dublin for the requirements of modern scientific training, and more especially to the chemical laboratory; and if it is proposed to take any steps to place the college on an equal footing with the similar institution at South Kensington?

**THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL** (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): My attention has been directed to the inadequacy of the building generally of the Royal College of Science in Dublin. The Science and Art Department has for some time been in correspondence with the Treasury and the Irish Government on the subject, and I hope that it may be found possible to provide the college with better accommodation. At the same time I may add that I consider that the buildings of the Royal College of Science at South Kensington are by no means adequate for the purposes for which they are used.

### ALLEGED DEATH FROM WANT IN COUNTY MAYO.

**MR. R. AMBROSE** (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if his attention has been called to the death from want of a Mr. Hegarty, of Doonardyce, county Mayo, and to the fact that the case has been brought under the notice of Inspector Lynch of the Local Government Board, and that he has taken no action to prevent more deaths taking place; and, have any relief works been yet established in the district of Doonardyce, in the Castlebar Union; and, if not, will he see that works are immediately opened so as to help the people to tide over the period of distress?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The attention of the Local Government Board has been drawn to the alleged death from want of the person named in the question, and inquiry is now being made into the matter. The Board have not considered it necessary to recommend the opening of works in this district.

### LAW AND JUSTICE ESTIMATES.

**SIR A. K. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will direct that pages 235–7 of the recently issued Law and Justice Estimates, Class III., be reprinted to show the actual amounts required for each class of English prison officials in salary and allowances for the past and present financial years, as is given in the case of the Irish and Scotch Prisons Services, and other Departments in this class?

**SIR JOHN HIBBERT**: I presume that what my hon. Friend desires is the details of subhead D of the Prison Vote, showing the method by which the figures of £307,732 for 1895–96 and £312,625 for 1894–95 are arrived at. I have taken note of this suggestion, and will communicate it to the Home Office for consideration in connection with future estimates. But in view of the elaborate details given on pages 239 to 247 I cannot think it necessary to give any further particulars in the current year.

### THE VOLUNTEERS.

**COLONEL C. E. HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, when he proposes to introduce the Bill in contemplation to enable the Government to accept the services of Volunteer corps or portions of corps in times of national emergency, as recommended by the Select Committee of last Session on the Volunteer Acts; and, in order that the introduction of such a Bill may not be liable to be interpreted as an act of menace to a Foreign Power, if he will consider the desirability of taking advantage of the peaceful relations now prevailing between Her Majesty and other Governments?

**THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. W. WOODALL, Hanley): The Bill to give effect to this recommendation has been prepared; and the Secretary of State hopes to introduce it very shortly after Easter.

### POST CARDS.

**MR. HENNIKER HEATON** (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, if he can state what is the estimated loss which the revenue would annually sustain if the thin post cards were sold at their face or stamp value, namely, for a halfpenny each.

**Sir JOHN HIBBERT**: If thin post cards were sold at their face value, the loss, calculated on the present numbers of such cards sold, would be about £6,000 a year; but as the effect of such a concession would naturally be that the thin official post card would tend to displace all other cards, no doubt the actual loss would be very much greater, and would extend to the private stationer as well as to the Revenue.

**Mr. HENNIKER HEATON** asked the right hon. Gentleman if he could say what the loss to the Department was on the sale of halfpenny post cards.

**Sir JOHN HIBBERT** said, he was was not able to give that information.

## WOMEN WORKERS IN TEXTILE FACTORIES.

***Sir CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in their recent visits to textile factories for the purpose of making inquiry as to the opinion and the wishes of the women workers with regard to women's overtime, the Inspectors have seen the women workers in the presence of their employers?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: An isolated case appears to have occurred in which the opinion of the operatives was asked in the presence of the employers; but this is entirely contrary to the usual practice of the factory inspectors, and instructions have been issued which will prevent its recurrence. It is clear that when operatives are questioned in the presence of their employers the inspector may fail entirely to ascertain their real opinions and wishes.

## THE AGED POOR COMMISSION.

**Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN**, Birmingham, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Government has considered the various Reports made by members of the Royal Commission on the Provision for Old Age; and what action they propose to take in regard to this question?

**The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Bradford, Central): The Reports have only been in my hands a very few days, and there has not been time for the consideration of them by the Government. I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to renew his question after Easter.

## RATHMINES TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland if his attention has been called to the reports in the Dublin Press of Thursday of the proceedings of the Rathmines Township Commissioners, from which it appears that the Assistant Secretary reported the introduction of the Municipal Franchise Bill in Parliament, and stated that their Secretary and the Secretary of the Pembroke Commissioners were both over in London watching the interests of the Commissioners, and also to the proceedings of the Blackrock Township Commissioners, at which the Chairman read a long letter from the Town Clerk, who was in London, commenting on the proceedings of the Parliamentary Committee having charge of this Bill, and that the writer was to have further conferences with the representatives of Pembroke and Rathmines townships, and Mr. Barton, in reference to the Bill; whether the Local Government Auditor will permit the expenses of these three officials to be charged on the rates; and will they ascertain whether their visit was undertaken without the authority of any Resolution of the townships?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: Perhaps my hon. and learned Friend will repeat this question on Monday. It was only placed on the Paper this morning, and there has not been sufficient time to obtain the observations of the Local Government Board.

## WELSH-SPEAKING TRAVELLING INSPECTORS.

**Mr. D. LLOYD-GEORGE**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether there is one of the travelling inspectors appointed by the Agricultural Department who is able to understand Welsh; and whether, seeing that the majority of the population in most of the agricultural districts of Wales are monoglot Welsh men, he will consider the advisability of appointing a Welsh-speaking Inspector to visit these districts?

***The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE** (Mr. Herbert C. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden):

I believe that none of the Inspectors to whom my hon. Friend refers can speak Welsh, but I am assured that no inconvenience has arisen from this fact. On the occurrence of a vacancy, however, I should be quite willing to give effect to my hon. Friend's suggestion, in the event of a Welsh-speaking candidate presenting himself who was fully qualified in other respects.

### THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

MR. CYRIL DODD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether that Department has any special complaint in regard to the Great Western Railway Company, whose Bill is down for Second Reading before this House, either under the Conciliation Clause of the Traffic Acts, 1888 and 1894, or the Railway Regulation (Servants' Hours) Act, 1893?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Board of Trade have no special complaint as regards the Great Western Railway. Under the Acts referred to, there are a number of cases pending, and these are being dealt with in the manner prescribed by law.

### LAND TAX.

MR. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the change made this year in the receipt form for Income Tax, House Duty, and Land Tax, in which the requirement formerly prescribed has been omitted, namely, that the receipt for Income Tax must be produced to the landlord on the claim being made on the landlord to allow the tax out of the next payment of rent; and whether, this change having been made, a landlord can still demand to see the receipt; and, if not, whether, if he allows the tax to be deducted from the rent, he will be free from all claim for the tax should it not be paid?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): It was found necessary to alter the wording of the form of receipts for taxes for 1894–95 in consequence of the passing of the Finance Act, and the opportunity was taken to make it a more convenient shape and to omit the words referred to in the question, for which there is no actual statutory authority. A landlord is, however, clearly within his rights in demanding proof that his tenant has paid his tax which he is deducting from his rent, as the tax, if unpaid by the tenant, would remain a charge on the property.

MR. BARTLEY: I understand it would be competent to require to see the receipt, although that is not stated.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, that is so.

### THE LOCAL VETO BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes to introduce the Local Veto Bill on Monday. Can he say whether the precedent of last year will be followed, and Ireland excluded from the operation of the Bill?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The same course has been followed in the Bill I am about to introduce as in the Bill of last year, and for the same reason. Of course, it will be entirely open to the House to say whether or not Ireland should be included. I propose to follow the precedent of last year.

### MR. MACGREGOR AND THE GOVERNMENT.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): With the indulgence of the House I wish to make a short personal statement. As the Government have hitherto failed to legislate for the Highlands, and have now declared through the Leader of the House that they have no time for the purpose, I decline any longer to play merely the part of a voting machine—["Oh, oh!" *and laughter*]—to keep the Government in Office while they fail to fulfil their pledges to my constituents.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. While this is no doubt a personal matter, it hardly comes within the denomination of a personal explanation. The hon. Gentleman will take his own course as to what he intends to do but this is hardly a matter which comes within the category of a personal explanation.

DR. MACGREGOR: Of course I bow to your ruling, but my object was a personal explanation, and I understood I was permitted to make it at this hour.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has made it.

### FISHERIES (CLOSE SEASON) (IRELAND) BILL.

On the Motion of Captain Donelan, Bill to amend the Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, 1842 to 1891, by providing the right of appeal in certain cases.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 195.]

### PURCHASE OF LAND BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to provide greater facilities for the sale of land to occupying tenants and others.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 24th April, and to be printed. [Bill 196.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### LAND LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (2nd April), "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs) said, that the House found itself in a very peculiar position with regard to the Bill. The Government had framed it, in their judgment, on lines of justice, for the removal of gross grievances affecting the economic wellbeing of the larger class of the people of Ireland, and they had framed it also in the interests of peace and of social order. What was the nature and character of the Opposition with which they were confronted? They were confronted by an Opposition so riven and distracted by internal differences of opinion on this topic that down to this hour it was impossible for anyone to understand whether the Opposition as a body really approved or disapproved of the principles of the measure. The Debate was less than academic, because from the point of view of the Opposition it approached to unreality itself. The right hon. Member for Dublin University viewed the measure as a disastrous and confiscatory one, and one, therefore, to be opposed to the "last extremity." But there was a first extremity to consider, namely, the Second Reading of the Bill, and that was not to be opposed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, who exhibited a luminous mastery of the subject, approved of ninety-nine-one-hundredths of the Bill. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham, while agreeing in this matter to follow the lead of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, made statements which he heard with regret, and almost with pain, with reference to the conduct and utterances of Members on the other side of the House. But they might have regard rather to the conduct than the language of the right hon. Gentleman. The speech of the hon. and learned Member for Mid Armagh (Mr. Dunbar Barton) was not marked by the irreconcilable tone of the right hon. Member for the University; on the contrary, the hon. and learned Member was for patient inquiry into the merits of the measure with a sincere desire that Ireland should benefit by its provisions. Now he came to the hon. Member for North Armagh. There, again, they found irreconcilability itself. The hon. Gentleman disapproved of this measure, but admitted that "a Bill" upon this subject was necessary. Yet though he spoke at considerable length, he gave the House not one spark of light or leading upon what that Bill should contain. But there was another Member who might be called as directly as any a representative of the Irish landlord class, and that was the hon. Member for Guildford. That hon. Member's speech was irreconcilable in tone and purpose, but in it their was one scintilla of light. The hon. Gentleman said, in effect, this:—

> "I am willing to agree to the proposition that after this protracted inquiry, and in view of the great suffering on the part of a large body of my fellow-countrymen, a Bill should be introduced and passed."

That Bill, the hon. Gentleman told them, should provide that when the statutory period of tenancy came to a close, be it in 10 years or 15 years, and when the parties to that tenancy, they being the landlord and the tenant, did not make a change in the conditions, then no change of conditions should ensue! What a remarkable contribution to the Debate and to the solution of the question! With all his professions of anxiety for the welfare of Ireland, they expected from the hon. Member some feast of fat things for the starving peasantry; but he seemed to be willing to say to the tenantry of Ireland that all he could do for them was to—

> " . . . cloy the hungry edge of appetite
> By bare imagination of a feast."

For there was nothing substantial in the suggestion he made. He might be asked what was the reason for the Bill, and there he found himself in direct opposition to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman said the Bill was not necessitated by the Act of 1881, it was not a corollary of that Act, but it was in contradiction of the very spirit of that statute. Now, what were some of the main provisions of the Bill? In the first place, it was intended to correct what in practice had been found under the Act of 1881 to disinherit a large portion of the tenantry of Ireland from that which, according to the spirit of the Act, was meant to be their inheritance. There were certain persons and certain holdings excluded from the beneficent provisions of the Act of 1881. Future tenants were excluded, although they had been created future tenants by the ejectment notices under the subsequent Act of 1887. Subletting tenants were excluded, although the landlord's security for his rent was absolutely unimpaired. He was told it was contrary to the spirit of 1881 that such people should have their rights guaranteed to them.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.) said his hon. and learned Friend would remember he was rather hurried last night. It was possible, therefore, he might not have made himself perfectly clear. He believed he said—if he did not he intended to say—that with regard to the removal of all these exclusions he agreed in principle with the Government Bill. There might be some discussion in Committee, but in principle he did not object to the removal of any of the exclusions.

*The SOLICITOR GENERAL for SCOTLAND was glad anything he had said had evoked the right hon. Gentleman's interposition, tending as it did to clear the air. To pursue his argument, might he say it was not only persons who had been excluded from the benefits of the Act of 1881, but, by virtue of their location, holdings? The hon. Member for South Tyrone referred to the case of demesne lands. Well he might. What was the meaning of the exclusion of demesne lands from the ordinary statutes referable to agriculture? It was that as they were, as was said in Scotland, the policy of the landowner, the surroundings of his residence, that which gave pleasure and amenity to his home, they should not be made subject to conditions with regard to perpetual tenure as other land was. But when they had a landlord disappearing, when they had his demesne falling into ruin, when the land of that demesne was let, not for 20, 30, 60 years, but let in perpetuity, what was the reason of that land being treated on any different footing from the rest of the land in Ireland? There was also the case of the town parks, a not inconsiderable class of holdings. He had sufficient respect for the Judges of his own and every other country not to presume to comment upon their law in the application of the provisions of a statute, but as to the interpretations placed upon the Act of 1881 he had his own opinion. It was a matter of historical occurrence that, as years had gone on, the areas of holdings which were considered towns had been limited and limited, with the result that the areas of land falling under the exclusion of town parks had been extended and extended. In the old time, or near 1881, a town was considered to be a place where, roughly, there were 2,000 inhabitants, but now it was whittled down to a town or village of 300 inhabitants. But there was a far more serious thing to be considered On what principle were fair rents fixed under the Act of 1881? The language of the Act was that—

> "no rent shall be allowed or be made payable in any proceedings under this Act with respect to improvements made by the tenant."

Would the House believe that the breadth and comprehensive power of those words had been whittled down by definition and sub-definition and sub-sub-definition, by interpretations of the Act, by administrations of the Act, until such an inroad had been made in the breadth of the provision that there was now left but a narrow strip of the ordinary signification of this plain English language? The intention Parliament had in passing the Act of 1881 was made perfectly clear by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian. The right hon. Gentleman said :—

> "The tenant's improvements were the tenant's own property, and he would not admit the principle that the time during which he had enjoyed these improvements was any reason for their passing away from him."

He further said :—

> "It is much better, I think, that those who make the improvements should have the whole benefit of the improvements."

That was the principle of the Act of 1881, and he would now explain why he did not consider the spirit of the Act of 1881 was controverted in this measure. What had been the history of this matter? A fair rent was, according to the Act of 1881, to be adjusted by the valuers viewing the soil and the improvements upon it—that was, the improvements made by the tenant or his predecessor in title—and by a just reckoning, for the purposes of exclusion from rent of what those improvements were worth. The first step in the declension to the state of things which the Bill sought to remedy took place when the Judges of Ireland were asked to define "improvements." Laymen afflicted with common sense would have said that "improvements" were "whatever improved." "Oh, no," said the Irish Judges, "improvements mean executed work—something involving capital expenditure;" and they further said, in substance and effect :—

> "If a man has got labourers in hundreds upon the land, and improves it by their labour, that is capital expenditure; but if a man has only his own arm to improve the land, that is not improvement; that is tillage of the soil."

Such was the *finesse* of Irish jurisprudence. Having got improvements into the category of works, the Judges proceeded to rule that what the tenant should be allowed was some kind of interest on the capital he had expended on those works. That was going pretty far, but apparently, the opinion of the Irish Judges, when it came to be administered and applied, was not going far enough. He had an extraordinary tale to tell, in connection with the next declension. The Judges, having given that decision, pointed out that the Act declared that both the interest of the landlord and the interest of the tenant should have regard paid to them, and they laid it down that that regard was to be paid, first, by giving the tenant an allowance by way of interest on his capital, and afterwards by allowing him and the landlord to share in the subsequent remainder profit. But would the House believe that, when that decision of law came to be administered by the Sub-Commissioners in the fixing of the fair rents, all of this remainder profit, or balance of the improvement value in which the tenant was to share, went to the landlord?

MR. W. G. E. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): Can the hon. and learned Gentleman refer us, in support of that statement, to any specific evidence of the Commissioners?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND: The House will find it in page 7 of the Report.

MR. MACARTNEY: I mean the evidence, and not the report.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND said, his hon. Friend would find in the report 10 or 15 references to evidence on the point in the Blue Book.

MR. MACARTNEY: I challenge the hon. and learned Gentleman to produce any evidence in support of his statement.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND said, the answer was, that there was evidence from Mr. Bailey, Mr. Doyle, and Mr. Greer, also two Lay Assistant Commissioners, as well as the County Court Judge of Kerry, and Mr. Heard,—

> "that the practice was to give to the landlord, after allowing the tenant a percentage on his outlay, any remainder of letting value due to the tenants improvements in the soil."

How, then, did the Government propose to remedy that sore grievance of the tenants? Not by any new departure, but by going back to the lines of the Act of 1881: for the policy of the Bill was that the increased letting value from improvements should and must go to those who made those improvements, according to the spirit of the Act of 1881 and the clearly expressed intentions of its authors. Only in that way could they promote industry on the part of the Irish tenants; only in that way could they produce, not only a sense of individual contentment, but a new sense of social well-being; and only in that way could they secure the great national benefit which would ensue when, the tenants being guaranteed in the fruits of their industry, the soil of Ireland would be made to yield its utmost. It was said that in this question of improvement the Government were going back to prairie value. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not content with that, for he had said they were going back to no value at all. But to say they were going back, in a chronological sense, to prairie value was absurd, and it was in direct conflict with the entire agrarian history of Ulster, seeing that the rights of tenants in Ulster were, nine-tenths of them, entirely analogous to those rights which they proposed to crystallise in the Bill, and to give to the tenants of the rest of Ireland. He was, however, in great sympathy with one remark made by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. "Prairie value," said the hon. Member; "but it depends on what prairie value." Of course it did. If they had the prairie value of Winnipeg in County Donegal that prairie value would be the best value the landlords of the county had seen there for centuries. What the Bill, when passed, would compel the valuers to do was, not to go back to the time of Brian Boru or to the time of the creation of man, but to judge of the capacity of the land, and, bearing in mind the improvements that brought it up to its present condition, fix a fair rent upon the land with that capacity and as at the present time. That was not prairie value in the historical sense at all. It was bringing the relations of the parties connected with land up to date. Then there was the question of occupation-right. It had been assumed by some hon. Members that they must take the value of the occupation-right in the sense of the price which had been paid by the purchasing tenant to get into the holding, and that then they should deduct, reckoning by such price, after they had assessed the fair rent. But this occupation-right was not to be reckoned or valued after the fair rent had been fixed; it was to be one of the things which entered into the judgment of the valuer in assessing the fair rent. What was the occupation-right? It could not be expressed otherwise than it was expressed in the Bill. The occupation-right in the Bill was stated to be the right of the tenant to the continued occupation of his holding. What did it matter what he paid for it? What had the valuers to do with that? He might have got it for a mere song; but if he had a statutable right to continue for ever, the valuers were deprived from valuing that tenancy on ordinary competitive principles, and they must value it on the principle of a fair rent apart from such competition. The occupation-right was the right to have the holding and to hold it against all comers, and when they extinguished the competitive value in that sense, then they had material for fixing a fair rent, taking the view that there was a right of occupation, but apart altogether from what that right of occupation cost the person to get it. The land was to be rented as land with all its improvable capacities in view. He took his stand here on authority, and he cited the judgment of Chief Baron Pallas on this very case. The Chief Baron said:—

> "The increased letting value caused by the improvements is not due to the creation solely of the tenant, but the result partly of the expenditure of the skill of the tenant, and partly of the inherent capabilities of the soil. Of these two elements, however, the first is supplied solely by the tenant, and the second—the inherent capabilities of the soil—is portion of that which has been let to him by the landlord for the term of his lease."

It was suggested by one of the speakers the previous night that when the land was let the parties had not in view the improvability of the soil; but the judgment of the Chief Baron proved that that improvability was taken into account, and was part of the ground upon which they came to an arrangement. As to everything else which was done to the soil by the tenant or his predecessors in title, the Government meant to make it clear that the whole of that should go to the tenant and his successors in title. It had been said that this Bill was a Bill for confiscation. It was not a Bill for confiscation: the law that confiscation by law should principle of the Bill was to declare by cease. The Government desired to abolish confiscation by law and to replace it by a system where industry would be secure of its reward. This question of rent upon improvements was very near the root of the entire controversy, and he should like to give an illustration from experience in Scotland upon this subject. It was said they were legislating upon novel principles in Ireland. They pointed to Ireland itself, and they replied that apart from legislation they had the case of Ulster, where, by long custom, the very rights they wished to set up by this Bill were enjoyed to the advantage of landlord and tenant. But, turning to the Crofters Act of 1886, the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath was, he was informed, quoted before the Crofters Commission, and they were confronted with some of its doctrines. He did not know what the *dicta* of the Judge, who so ably presided over the Crofters Commission and the Highland Commission, were; but they made very short work of Adams *v.* Dunseath. What the Crofters Commissioners had to do was analogous to what the Land Commissioners had to do in fixing a fair rent. A sub-section of Section 6 of the Crofters Act of 1886 stated that when an application was made to them to fix a fair rent to be paid by a crofter, the Commissioners, after hearing all the parties and considering all the circumstances of the case, the holding and the district, and after taking into consideration any permanent or unexhausted improvement in the holding executed or paid for by the crofter, might determine what should be a fair rent. When the Crofters Commission commenced their operations, application was made to them, on the one hand, by the tenants, that they should be credited with the entire value of the improvements, or, rather, that the improvements should not be reckoned against them; and, on the other hand, by the landlords that doctrines analogous to those in Adams *v.* Dunseath, and the refinements and distinctions that applied in that cause should be applied to the Scotch practice. What did the Crofters Commission do as recorded in their Report for the year and a half ending 1887? The head of the Commission stated that in determining a fair rent they had to consider the facts as between man and man. The wealth of the landlord or the poverty of the crofter did not touch the fairness of the rent, but the improvements that had been effected did touch the fairness very closely. And then followed these *dicta*, which looked almost like a direct paraphrase of the language of the right hon. Member for Midlothian in advocating the principles of the Bill of 1881:—

> "If the landlord made the improvements the crofters should pay a rent on them. If the crofter made them he cannot be asked, in fairness, to pay a rent on them."

In another passage of the Report Sheriff Brand said—

> "The Commissioners are allowed to take into consideration how far the tenant has already in substance been paid for what he did. It cannot be a fair rent to charge a crofter rent on his own improvements for which he has not, in fact, received an equivalent."

That was the principle of this Bill. He had shown how the principle expressed in the language of the Member for Midlothian, in introducing his Bill in 1881, of giving the tenant everything which was due to him by reason of improvements, made by him or his predecessor in title, had been whittled away in Ireland until they had only got a narrow strip left, while it was not whittled away in Scotland at all. In Ireland the principle intended by the right hon. Member for Midlothian, as that upon which fair rents should be fixed, had been restricted point by point; but in Scotland they had fair rents on the principle of fairness *per se.* He would read one passage from the recently issued Highlands and Islands Commission Report, for the special purpose of showing what the Act of 1881, if it had been interpreted in such a sense, would have done for Ireland, and what they wanted this Bill to do for Ireland in the future. Sheriff Brand said—

> "Before leaving this part of the subject-matter, we deem it right to place on record the results of our observation of the effect of the Crofters' Holdings Act of 1886. Our inspection of lands throughout the counties mentioned brought us into immediate proximity with many crofting townships, as well as with the individual holdings of many crofters, and accordingly we derived materials for judgment from a very large portion of crofting area."

Would that the following could be said of Ireland in connection with the administration of the Act of 1881 !—

> "Our opinion is that, speaking generally, the Act has had a beneficial effect, and particularly in the following directions :—In the first place, the fixing of a fair rent has to a large extent removed from the mind of the crofters the sense of hardship arising from the belief that they were made to pay rent on their own improvements, or otherwise made to pay an excessive rent for soil of poor quality. In the second place, the combination of a fair rent, with statutory security of tenure, has not only taken away or allayed causes of discontent, but has imparted a new spirit to crofters and imbued them with fresh energy."

It could not be concealed from the eye of even the most casual observer, this improvement due to the assessment of fair rent, coupled with the security of holding. The improvement was so marked as almost to transform many a country side in Scotland. For instance, the Commission found that more attention was being paid to cultivation, to rotation of crops, to reclamation, and to the maintenance and repair of township roads. The Lord Advocate, the author of the Statute, might well look upon that Report with extreme gratification. The Act was framed on principles which had not been misinterpreted, but it was framed on the same principles on which it was meant to frame the Act of 1881. They were not laying down new lines. They were going back to the old lines of 1881, but, in the light of Scottish experience, with a new determination to make those principles effective in law. When the example of Ulster was cited, and when, for instance, it was pointed out that the landlords' right of pre-emption did not exist in Ulster, and that there the presumption as to who executed improvements was practically what it was in this Bill, it was urged, "Oh. Ulster is different!" The taunt had been urged against a large portion of the Irish people that their indolence was the cause of their lack of prosperity, and they had said :—

> "Don't judge by the people of Ulster; they belong to a different race; they came from the South of Scotland."

That was true. But he did not ask people to judge by Ulster, but by the effect of the principle on a race akin to the Irish—the Highland population of Scotland. We found in the Highlands a people like the Irish people. They were alike in constitution and temper, alike in the chronic agricultural distress in which they had been plunged, alike in their passionate love of country, and alike in the fact that when they were placed under happier social and economic conditions they were able in any continent of the world to adorn and become illustrious in any rank of life. To a people so constituted, if they changed the economic conditions under which industry was conducted and made labour sure of its reward, they would find the like results in Ireland among Irishmen that they found in the Highlands. It was said that unless the Bill was amended it would be a "duty" to throw it out in another place,—that the same treatment should be meted out to this Bill as to the Home Rule Bill. In another place the Home Rule Bill was thrown out on Second Reading. Yet this Bill was not even to be attacked on Second Reading in this House, and what the right hon. Member for West Birmingham and his party thought not good enough for them was to be good enough for another place. He hoped such advice would not be taken, and that the Bill would be approached in a more reasonable frame of mind. The Government were prepared to adhere firmly to the great main lines of the Bill, not with the idea that it would bring contentment alone, but that it would bring national benefit. Taking the direct and indirect number of those who were affected by this measure, he reckoned them at not much under two million souls; to whom they wished to give a new sense of fairness as between man and man, by the elevation of tenant-right to that level which the honour of Parliament itself was pledged to attain to by the Act of 1881, and which they now declared in unmistakable language. These things reacted on the whole body politic, bringing fresh security to labour, and a fresh title by the way of justice to contentment and to peace.

*MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) said, the Bill was admitted on all sides to be necessary, and if it had been presented to Members as explained by the Chief Secretary and the Solicitor General for Scotland, they would not have had so much opposition to it from the Conservative side of the House. He regretted, however, that the Chief Secretary, in his provisions relating to evicted tenants, did not go a step further by introducing, on behalf of those tenant-farmers who throughout the land agitation honestly paid their rents, clauses to grease the wheels of the Land Purchase Acts. Differing from the hon. Member for South Hunts, he did not object to the right hon. Gentleman giving a subvention towards the evicted tenants, provided he gave it out of Imperial funds, but he should oppose its being given out of the Irish Church Fund. His view of the Bill had been exhaustively and ably dealt with by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and with most of his views he concurred. Reading the Bill in the light of the explanation given by the Chief Secretary and the Solicitor General for Scotland, he did not believe there was any force in the allegation that it would reduce rents to prairie values. The intention of both sides of the House was that the tenants of Ireland should not be charged rent upon their own improvements. That the tenants in Ireland had been charged upon their improvements in times past no one could deny. He himself had had a long experience of the Land Acts in Ireland. He remembered hearing the County Court Judge of Fermanagh, when administering the Act of 1870, warning the landlords that if they did not honestly conform to the provisions of the Act and carry out the intention of Parliament, they would meet with a social revolution. The hon. and learned Member for Dublin University had described this Bill as a revolution—and no doubt, in his estimation, the Act of 1881 was a revolution. If it were, it was a revolution which the landlords had brought upon themselves by reason of the opposition which they gave to the Act of 1870 and the attempts which they made to defeat the intentions of Parliament. With reference to the first clause of the Bill, he understood that the reduction of the judicial term was advocated during the sittings of the Cowper Commission; and before the Select Committee one of the ablest of the County Court Judges in Ireland—a man who had had experience not only of Ulster but also of the South and West of Ireland—gave it as his opinion, having been a member of the Cowper Commission, and having been engaged in the administration of the Act of 1881, that the 15 years' term was too long, and that the ten years' term would be fairer and would work more justly to both parties. He was not prepared to differ with the opinion of so able and high-minded a Judge as the Recorder of Cork, and therefore he most gladly supported this provision in the 1st Clause of the Bill. But a matter of great difficulty was raised when they came to consider whether tenants now holding under the fifteen years' term should be allowed to come into Court at the end of ten years. He was quite willing to agree to the proposal provided it was feasible, for he did not believe it would work any substantial injustice to the landlord. But how was it to be done? It was estimated that there were 240,000 tenants in Ireland holding under a judicial term, nine years of which had already expired, and who would be ready to walk into Court. In addition to that, every tenant excluded from having a fair rent fixed under the Act of 1881 would also be ready to walk in. By what machinery would the Government fix all these rents? They might appoint 200 or 300 temporary Sub - Commissioners, but that would never settle the land question because there would be no end of appeals if the appointments made were of a temporary character. If the Chief Secretary thought he could get over the difficulty by adding 30 or 40 sub-Commissioners to the present staff he was labouring under a great delusion. With regard to town parks the absurd position to which that question had been reduced by the recent decision of the Court of Appeal, in the case of Archer *v.* Caledon, had rendered it absolutely necessary that the House should, in clear terms, either define in accordance with their intentions what a town park is in so many words, or define it by the population limit. As regards future tenants he was at one with the Chief Secretary as to the first portion of Clause Four. It was reasonable to say that a man who became a future tenant by the operation of the 7th Section of the Act of 1887, his old tenancy having been thereby determined, and who was afterwards re-instated, should be re-created a present tenant. But the Bill did not stop there. It said that any future tenancy, created before the 22nd of August 1887, was to be turned into a present tenancy. Why should that be? The Government of 1881 stated that upon no terms would they consent to extend present tenancies beyond those existing at the date of the passing of the Act of 1881, or created between the latter date and the 1st January 1883. He wanted to know who made the suggestion that future tenants who entered into contracts after the passing of the Act of 1881, and before the passing of the Act of 1887, were to be turned into present tenants? [AN HON. MEMBER: "The hon. Member for South Tyrone"]. If that proposal emanated from the hon. Member for South Tyrone, for whose opinions and common-sense he had a great respect, all he could say was that he did not agree with him. He certainly would be no party to supporting the second portion of Clause 4. Clause 5 was the clause of the Bill, which, so to speak, had raised the dander of the landlords. He did not believe that clause, as explained by the Chief Secretary and the Solicitor General for Scotland, would have the effect that was anticipated by the advocates of the Irish landlords. But if the right hon. Gentlemen's intentions were to be carried into effect, they must be put in the Act in plain language. The Chief Secretary must not let loose a large number of sub-Commissioners over the country with the Section as it now stood. If he did, each Sub-Commissioner would interpret it as he pleased. The third sub-section of the Clause dealt with the increased letting value caused by reason of the inherent capabilities of the soil. The hon. and learned Member for Dublin University used the words "unearned increment." He did not think the phrase "inherent capabilities of the soil" was at all the same as "unearned increment." If the construction of a railway, for instance, benefited a man's land, that benefit was unearned increment. The late Mr. Butt, who was one of the ablest lawyers of his day, in his learned treatise on the Act of 1870, gave no sanction to such a doctrine as that enjoyment would amount to compensation for improvements, and he laid it down that, so long as the land was in the tenancy of the tenant, he was entitled to the full benefit of the increased value caused by the capability of the soil. He thought the landlords of Ireland had no ground for the belief so common among them, that their rents would be reduced to prairie value by this clause of the Bill. They had heard a great deal about Adams *v.* Dunseath. He had been engaged in a great many land cases in Ireland since October, 1881, down to the present time, and he had often to refer to that case; but until he heard the evidence of Lord Justice FitzGibbon before the Committee, he had never heard it suggested that a tenant having his rent fixed should be allowed anything in respect of improvements, except the interest upon the value and cost of the improvement works. He was so surprised at the answer of the Lord Justice that he availed himself of every opportunity to ask Members of the Bar, as also legal and lay sub-Commissioners, this question:—

> "Did you ever understand that the decision in Adams *v.* Dunseath, after giving the interest on the improvement works to the tenants, declared that anything remaining should be distributed between the landlord and the tenant?"

Not one of them so understood it. No doubt what the Lord Justice said was perfectly accurate, but it was never so understood, and it was a curious thing that in 14 years there had not been a single appeal on that point. If this clause were put into intelligible language he should support it on the same grounds as the hon. Member for South Tyrone. As to pre-emption, in Ulster they had got no pre-emption, and in that respect Ulster differed from the other three provinces. It might be unjust to take away the right of pre-emption which the landlords enjoyed in the other three provinces, but in Ulster they never had the wholesale evictions of which they heard in other parts of Ireland. They had, in Ulster, farms descending from father to son ever since their ancestors came over from Scotland and England. No doubt the right of pre-emption might be useful, as the Member for Guildford contended, in keeping down the exorbitant prices paid by the tenants for the goodwill. With reference to Section 11, he thought it was perfectly just, and he should heartily support it. Reference had been made to the use, by the Member for South Tyrone, of the word "confiscation" in connection with the Redemption of Rent Act. The Member for West Birmingham seemed to take exception to the word, but anyone conversant with the administration of the Redemption of Rent Act would know what confiscation was. A man holding under a fee farm grant asked to have a fair rent fixed; he had built a good substantial dwelling-house, drained, fenced, and tilled his farm in the best possible manner. He goes into the Court under the Redemption of Rent Act, and what is the result? He got his rent fixed, no doubt, but because he was a fee-farm tenant, and not included in the Act of 1870, it was fixed on every single improvement. What was that? He called it confiscation. Another injustice was, where objection was taken because a portion of the farm was sub-let, even though the landlord might have been the party who sub-let. On that ground the tenant was held not to be in possession of the farm. The result was—the tenant, though he might be rack-rented, got no relief except the dismissal of the orignating notice with costs. That was a case which had come within his own personal knowledge, and occurred in the County Fermanagh. If that was not confiscation he did not know the meaning of the word. Next, as to the 14th Section, he confessed he did not understand it at present, but he had conferred with the Solicitor General for Scotland in the matter, and he thought it would be amended. There never was a greater curse in Ireland than the hanging gale—that was, the tenant was allowed to get one year in arrears, and then if he went for two or three years in arrears and could not pay up, the landlord might turn him out. The provision might work a little hardly, and perhaps a little injustice to the tenants for the next year or two, because the landlords might put on the screw and bring ejectments. But it was a step in the right direction, and if the clause carried out the right hon. Gentleman's intentions as he understood them from the speech of the Solicitor-General for Scotland, he would cordially support it. Those with whom he was in touch in Ulster believed that the Chief Secretary was sincere in his efforts to pass this Bill. He believed he could pass it, but it could only be by making some concessions and, above and before all, by making his intentions clear on the face of the Bill. The tenants in Ireland generally owed a deep debt of gratitude to the hon. Member for South Tyrone for taking so much interest in elaborating their grievances before the Select Committee and for advocating their interest through the country. He, as a humble Member of the Conservative Party, viewed with the greatest horror, and, if he might say so, disgust, the manner in which his action had been treated by a section of the Unionist press in Ireland. He believed the hon. Member honestly acted according to his convictions, and that no pressure, from whatever source it might come, would make him deviate from the path he believed to be just.

Mr. T. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, the observations of the hon. Member who had just spoken, whether they were laudatory or critical of the provisions of the Bill, had no particular bearing on the question whether the Bill should be read a second time. He cordially joined in the well-merited compliment which had been paid to the Solicitor-General for Scotland. Scotch law, he believed, was as complicated as any other, but he ventured to suggest that the Irish land law had been so embroiled by the cumulative subtleties of the Irish tribunals that, originally complicated, it now almost passed comprehension by the human intellect. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not had a long Parliamentary experience and had not, until the present occasion, had any need to concern himself with the particulars of Irish law, and he thought it would be admitted that, in these circumstances, the grasp of principles and the mastery of details he had displayed in his speech was an achievement of notable excellence. He thought it must be admitted that the Debate, so far as it was directed against the Second Reading, might be described as sham fight. The Bill had been called a Bill of confiscation and a Bill of revolution. The Conservative Party regarded themselves as a bulwark against revolution, yet through the great part of the afternoon the Conservative Benches were empty. The Leader of the Opposition was absent and his followers were not present.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was in the House during the whole of the speech of the Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Mr. SEXTON said, that during the whole of the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down the Conservative Benches were empty with the exception of the right hon. Gentleman who was formerly, to his lasting honour, connected with the Nationalist movement in Ireland, and whose presence he attributed to his natural desire, if only for the sake of old times, to lift his voice on behalf of the tenants of Ireland. The action of the Conservative Party in not challenging a Division on this Bill had been denominated wise. He thought it hardly deserved that epithet. To say a course of action be wise was to suggest that it required some high and eminent faculties of human knowledge in order to select that course, but there were certain facts which he thought might have convinced the Conservative Party that any other course than that of assenting to the Second Reading of the Bill would be one of extreme impudence. He had no doubt they remembered that the Bill promoted by the Irish Party last year—a Bill which dealt more broadly than the present one with some aspects of the question and contained some propositions more advanced than any in the present Bill—was read a second time by unanimous assent, and that a dilatory Amendment directed against it was defeated by a majority of 89. The memory of that fact remained. He had also to notice as a reason for the course taken by the Conservative Party that the Report on which this Bill was founded, a Report in regard to which, he affirmed, every fact was directly founded on the evidence and every proposition directly proceeded from the facts, represented the unanimous opinion of the representatives of four or five organized bodies of Members in this House. The Report represented the unanimous opinion of the Liberal Party, the Irish Party, the Party led by the hon. Member for Waterford, and the Liberal Unionist Party. The Tory wing of the Unionist Party was alone not reprepresented in assent to the Report. It therefore indicated a majority far in advance of the normal majority of the Government. But perhaps the most weighty reason for the course of the Opposition was to be found in the state of public opinion in Ireland. Upon that public opinion in Ireland, and especially the public opinion in Ulster, he preferred the opinions of the hon. and learned Member for Mid Armagh to the opinions of the hon. and gallant Member for the northern division of the county. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh must have a very exceptional constituency, because he suggested that his electors would prefer him to follow his own inclinations rather than theirs, and that of the two his farmers would rather prefer that he should advance the interests of the landlords. The hon. and learned Member for Mid Armagh very frankly declared to the House that 100,000 Unionist farmers in Ireland were determined to support the Bill. He doubted whether the number of Unionist farmers in Ireland reached anything like 100,000, but whatever their number might be he was convinced they were determined to support this Bill, and to oblige their representatives to support it. When the Second Reading had been taken and they entered on the Committee stage it would be found that the support of this Bill by the Unionist farmers in Ulster was not merely a support of the Second Reading but of all its material propositions, and that hon. Gentlemen were greatly mistaken if they thought they would be allowed to compound by assenting to the Second Reading for any obstructive opposition in Committee. Votes in that House were more valuable than speeches, and public opinion, taking note of the fact that the principle of this Bill was accepted by the judgment of the House, would, he thought, regard that as conclusive proof of the necessity, the equity, and the urgency of the Bill, and would regard speeches delivered in opposition to it as merely a dialectical display. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham last night levelled taunts against the hon. Member for East Mayo and against the work of the Land League. It was the right hon. Member for West Birmingham who declared in a public speech that if there had been no Land League there would have been no Land

Act of 1881. The House was driven to pass that Act by the agitation inspired and mobilised by the Land League; and the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was one of those who were responsible for the introduction of the Bill of 1881. It might be said that, in introducing and pressing forward that Bill, he acted substantially as a Minister of the Land League quite as much as a Minister of the Crown. The hon. Member for East Mayo could afford to bear the taunts of the right hon. Gentleman, because he was one of the foremost and most resolute of the men who, by heavy labour and at no small penalty of personal suffering, had led the Irish people, in the course of the last 14 years, from the position in which they stood at the outset of the movement — the position of a nation of serfs, subject to all the disabilities and obligations of serfs, but possessing not one of their rights—to the point which they had reached to-day—the point at which, according to the confession of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham last night, the only question that remained to be determined was how soon and by what mode the interest of the landlord was to be extinguished; how soon the despised serf of 14 years ago, whom the Land League inspired with the spirit of a man, was, by the disappearance of the landlord from the agrarian system, to become the sole owner of the soil. The men who had accomplished this object by the labour of their lives could bear with equanimity the taunts of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The objects of the Land League had been affirmed by the legislation of this House, carried on the initiative of both parties. The prospectus and the card of membership, bearing the date of 1879, stated that the objects were—first, to put an end to rack-renting and unjust evictions; and, secondly, to enable every tenant to become, on fair terms, the purchaser of his holding. The confirmation of the first of these two principles was the main object of the Act of 1881. Ten years later the right hon. Member for West Birmingham having become, if not a Minister, a leader of the Tory party, affirmed the second of the two principles. Never had any popular movement been so conclusively approved by those who condemned it at the outset. Yes, the principles of the Land League had been affirmed, but they had not been carried out efficiently, as they would have been if the legislation had been conducted by a Legislature responsible to the people of Ireland. The great difficulty this house had in dealing with Irish affairs, and especially with the land question, was the ignorance of most British Members of the conditions of Ireland. In the intervals between legislative efforts old Members had forgotten all they had learnt and new Members had to begin learning facts that were familiar to every Irish peasant. In Ireland the conditions were so alien to those which prevailed in England that Irish Members had each time to begin, as it were, with the very primer of the question. So many efforts had been made to deduce the conclusion that the administration of the Land Act had done justice that he was obliged to point out that the conditions of occupation in England and Ireland were so different as to admit of no comparison except by way of contrast. In England the landlord was a landlord in the real sense of the term, and the tenant was really a tenant. The Irish landlord was simply a rent-charger, and the Irish tenant had been made by law part owner of the soil. Rent in England was fixed upon a lower scale than in Ireland; and some day the House might be asked to pass a Bill to assimilate the relation between produce and rent in Ireland to what it was in England; that would be something like a fundamental change; but the object to-day was a more modest one. By general concurrence the English landlord took on the average one-fifth of the produce of the soil; and the Irish landlord took one-third. The English landlords made all the improvements, devoted to them a large proportion of their income, and every generation spent scores of millions for this purpose. The income-tax assessments showed that, since the establishment of the Land Courts in Ireland, the incomes of the English landlords had gone down from 52 to 41 millions. The income-tax returns were not exhaustive because there were many abatements which were not shown in them. If 20 per cent. reduction, and more, had been made in the rents of English landlords, who had made improvements and took but one-fifth of the produce, what reduction should have been made in the rents of Irish landlords, who did not make improvements and took one-third of the produce? The figures proved that the Land Act of 1881 had not had all the effect it ought to have had. No serious comment had been made upon 11 or 12 of the 17 operative clauses of the Bill; criticism had been concentrated upon three points, and the first of these was the shortening of the statutory term. The statutory term in the Act of 1881 was obviously experimental, and, if it were proved that the equity of the case required that that term should be shortened, he should think that neither the hon. Member for South Tyrone nor anyone else would venture to affirm that a demand for equity should be disregarded, because of the fact that contracts would have to be broken, Surely it was too late in the day to speak of breach of contracts in connection with Irish land laws. Contracts were broken by the Act of 1881; leaseholds were broken by the Act of 1887; permanent leases were broken by the Act of 1891. The Conservative Party went further in the direction of breach of contract, and decreed that judicial contracts should be broken, and that the rents fixed by the tribunals of the country should be subject to adjustment for a period of three years. Could the statutory term of 15 years be maintained? Was it not obvious that, if they passed this Bill and made these amendments to the law, if they guaranteed to the tenant that right in his improvements which administration now took away, if they guaranteed to him the recognition of his occupation right, it followed as a matter of necessity that the rents which had been fixed since the Land Act came into operation, the excessive rents, could not be equitable if they ran for 15 years. The reductions given by the Land Commission in and up to 1885 were only on the average about 18 per cent., the reductions in 1886 were 24 per cent., the reductions in 1887 were 31 per cent., and there had been since 1886 down to the present moment a fall in values, and there was still a drooping tendency. There was an overwhelming concurrence of testimony to the effect that the rents fixed in the earlier years of the Land Act were now excessive rents. The report declared them to be materially excessive. The inevitable consequence was that this Parliament should feel it a duty to seize the occasion to deal with the whole question for the purpose of enabling those tenants who were now paying excessive rents to have recourse again to tribunals. Not only were the rents fixed in Court excessive, but Mr. Bailey, a witness before the Committee, and a gentleman who by his exhaustive knowledge of the law, and by his great experience in its administration, did more than any other witness to lead the Committee through the labyrinths of the case, handed in a paper to show that in 50 cases heard in his own district, where agreements had been made in the earlier years of the Land Act which had not been filed and were therefore invalid, the tenants took advantage of that fact to enter the Courts in recent years, with the result that the original reduction of 18 per cent. given by the agreements had 20 per cent. added to it by the Courts. It was clear from that that the reductions granted in the earlier years were not adequate to the needs of the case. The only question was how long the terms should be; the term of 15 years was experimental. It had been seen that the Tory Party, six years after the passing of the Land Act, were obliged to adjust judicial rents, and that the amount of the reductions given in the Land Courts had greatly increased from year to year; it was admitted that there had been a disastrous fall in prices, and he did not think there was one Land Commissioner who cast doubt upon the proposition that a period of 15 years was so long that it was perfectly impossible in fixing the rents to foresee the course of prices. He was disposed to think that a period of less than ten years might properly be fixed, but, at any rate, the statutory term should not exceed that period. The opposed provisions of the Bill were really those referring to the occupation-right and to the improvements. With regard to the occupation-right he referred to the direction in the Act of 1881 that the Court in fixing the fair rent was to have regard to the interest of the tenant. What was that interest? It could not have been anything else than what was popularly known and described in the Bill as the occupation-right. The Act also directed the Court that no rent should be allowed or made payable in respect of improvements. If, in the general direction as to the interest of the tenant, the House intended to refer to improvements, that would unquestionably have been stated. The direction in the ninth sub-section was explicit and complete in relation to improvements; it declared that no rent should be allowed or made payable in respect of them, and, therefore, he submitted it was quite clear that the instruction in the Act that the Court was to have regard to the interest of the tenant had no relation to improvements, which were dealt with elsewhere, but had relation to this occupation-right, to the right of the tenant to perpetual occupation, and the attendant rights under the Act of 1870, of compensation for disturbance and compensation for improvements, and the rights under the Act of 1881 to sell the interest to the landlord at the true value fixed by the Court, or, in the alternative, at the highest price to be obtained in the market. The hon. Member for South Tyrone thought he disposed of the question by calling it a valuable asset. How did that term prove that it was not to be considered in fixing the fair rent? The interest of the landlord might also be called a valuable asset, but that was no reason why it should not govern the amount of rent. If they went to the root of the matter and asked how the Ulster custom arose, they would find conclusive proof that occupation-right must be considered in the amount of the rent. The Ulster custom allowed the tenant to sell his interest in the holding, and imposed upon the landlord an obligation not to raise the rent so as to encroach upon the interest of the tenant. That obligation meant that the value of the custom formed an element in fixing the amount of the rent, and it was obvious that under the Ulster custom occupation-right was considered in relation to the rent. Passing from Ulster to other parts of Ireland, if a landlord purchased the interest of the tenant at what the Land Courts called its true value—namely, its economic value—would not the landlord consider himself entitled to raise the rent upon the interest he had purchased? If, then, the acquirement of the occupation-right by the landlord entitled him to change the amount of the rent, why should not the possession of the occupation-right by the tenant also affect the amount of the rent? The sub-Commissioners examined before the Committee gave evidence that they fixed the rent of a holding at what would be the fair rent for an incoming tenant if the farm were in the hands of the landlord, but the interest of the landlord was only part of the value of the holding; the occupation-right was another part of the value. Why should the rent be fixed upon the occupying tenant who had a valuable right, which was a material part of the value of the holding, as if he had no interest, and as if the farm were in the hands of the landlord? It was obvious that the rent of the occupying tenant with a statutory right must necessarily be fixed at a lower figure than the rent to be paid by a new tenant without any interest in the holding. Of course, it must not be forgotten that the head of the Judicial Commission speaking for his Court, and Lord Justice FitzGibbon, speaking for the Court of Appeal, had justified the view that the occupation-right ought to be and was considered, and that it was only by considering the occupation-right that anything could be given to the tenant beyond the percentage on this outlay. Upon the general question of improvements he pointed out that the general direction of the Land Act, that no rent should be allowed or made payable upon the improvements of the tenant, had not been carried out by the judgment of Adams *v.* Dunseath, and had been wholly disregarded by the Courts of sub-Commission. The language of the Act was as plain as words could be—

> "No rent shall be allowed or made payable in respect of the improvements of the tenants."

These words must be understood in their natural sense and given their full ordinary meaning. But the tenant had been plundered because the term "improvement," if it required definition, was not defined in the Act of 1881. But there was at the end of the definition clause a paragraph, the significance of which was not perceived by one Member of a hundred in the House, enacting that if any word used in the Act of 1881 was not defined in that Act, but in the Act of 1870, the latter should be accepted, and that the two Acts should be read and construed together. The word "improvement" in the Act of 1870 was defined as "a work." The Judges were entitled, by the construction of the Act, to lay hold of the definition. They laid hold of it, and said,

> "An improvement is a work. The tenant under the Act of 1870 is to be compensated for his work when quitting his holding. He can be compensated for his work by allowing him interest on his outlay."

The net result was that, whilst the Act declared that no rent should be allowed or made payable in respect of the improvements of the tenant, the Judges, by a masterpiece of subtlety unequalled in the administration of the law, converted the plain declaration of the Act that no rent should be allowed or made payable in respect of the improvements of the tenant into a declaration that rent was to be allowed on the improvements of the tenant, and all that the tenant was to receive was only 5 per cent. on the money he had expended. That was rank plunder of the tenant. Five per cent. was no more than he would have obtained if he had invested the money in any business. It took no account of any risk or losses, but said that when there was a profit in excess of 5 per cent. the profit should go to the landlord. So the law in Ireland only gave the tenant interest upon his money whilst the improvement lasted, and the profit of his capital went to the landlord. The definition of improvement in the present Bill, if it stood alone, made no alteration in the law. "Improvement" was "work" in the Act of 1870. In the present Act it was "the expenditure of labour and capital," and, if it was open to the Courts under the Act of 1870 to say they had sufficiently compensated the tenant by a percentage on his work, it would be equally open to them to say they would compensate him by a percentage on his expenditure of labour or capital. So if the Amendment stood alone the law would not be improved. But sub-Section 3 appeared to make a valuable improvement in the law. He said "appeared," because he had fear of the Irish Judges before him. It appeared to concede the principle that a tenant was entitled to the letting value derived from his improvements. Seeing that rents in Ireland reduced by the Land Courts were old competition rents which the fierceness of competition had run up to a level so intolerable that the law had to interfere, that they were fixed on the value of the improvements of the tenants, and only 20 per cent. reduction was obtained, he was of opinion that these rents, whether fixed by the landlord before the passing of the Land Acts or by the Land Courts since, included the utmost value of every quality, capacity, incident, and characteristic of the soil. He did not understand what was meant by the use of the word "inherent." It did not change the facts; the capacity was there; the capacity of the soil was the quality of the soil, and that was fully valued in fixing the amount of rent; and he could not assent to the suggestion that any part of the letting value added by the tenant to the soil should be paid away in rent to the landlord. Agricultural improvement was of vital importance to Ireland. The future of Ireland depended upon it. The agriculture of Ireland was backward because the soil was unimproved. This was so, very much because the value of the improvements, or a part of it, had been confiscated by the landlords. It was essential that the tenants should be encouraged, and not discouraged, by being told that any improvement in the letting value would go to the landlord. If the tenant in Ireland understood that any part of the improved letting value would be added to the rent, and that there would be a fine levied on his industry, it would be most discouraging and prejudicial to the future of Ireland. His own contention as to the increased letting value of land was simply and plainly this—that the landlord, by the judicial rent, was paid already for every quality and capacity of the soil, and he could not agree that a class of rent-chargers, whose only remaining care was to obtain a certain number of years' purchase of the rent as it now stood, should have a royalty upon the future fruits of the industry of the Irish peasant. The Irish representatives, with one voice and one determination, would maintain that the rent now payable to the landlord by the *fiat* of the Court exhausted to the last penny his interest in the holding, and that every penny added in the past by the labour of the tenant, or which might be added hereafter, must be secured as his property, and not a bit of it must go to the landlord. He would not further discuss the question of improvements except to say generally that, in his opinion, the lines of obstacles placed by the interpretation of the Act of 1881 between the tenant and the realisation of his right in respect of his improvements were likely to be, in the main, removed by the provisions of the Bill. There was no fact more notorious than that improvements in Ireland had been made by the tenant and no one else. He did not understand what was meant by "prairie value" or by the mention of prairie value in relation to this case. When hon. Members spoke of it, to what time did they refer? Was it suggested that the landlords were to be thrown back on the value of the land at some former era. There was no improvement upon the soil of Ireland which was of monetary value and could affect rent except improvements made in recent times. Drainage had to be renewed at intervals, and reclamation such as they found in Ireland—of marsh, bog, and mountain—had to be maintained and renewed from time to time by further expenditure. The argument of prairie value had no relation to the case. He regretted that the notorious fact that the improvements in Ireland had been made by the tenants, and that recommendation of the Committee, had not been acted upon. The disastrous consequences of the time limit, fixed by the Act of 1870 and applied in the Act of 1881, was that the tenant's presumption was virtually abolished. He was entitled to the presumption in respect of improvements effected after a certain date, and not with respect to those effected afterwards. The practice of the Courts, in order to ascertain whether the tenant was entitled to the presumption, had been to make him prove the date of the improvement, or, in other words, to make him prove what he would have had to prove without being entitled to the presumption. He feared that the same result would follow from the time limit in the present Bill, having regard to the tendency in Ireland to warp the law to the prejudice of the tenant, and to the universally admitted fact that, while the landlord could always prove his improvements, the tenant had no legal proof as to improvements made before his occupation. As to the subjects omitted from the Bill, he regretted that there was no provision in regard to arrears, such as was embodied in the Crofters Act. The question of arrears was shut out from the consideration of the Committee by a Division taken when only 11 Members were present; but it was not necessarily shut out from the scope of the Bill. No one who had studied the subject could question that the existence of arrears in Ireland was due to excessive rents, and had operated as an obstacle to many tenants going into the Land Courts. He had no expectations that the benefits of the Land Act of 1881 would be extended to the full body of those who were entitled to claim them until the Courts were given some equitable jurisdiction in regard to the liquidation of arrears. There was another material omission from the Bill. The Committee unanimously recommended that certain particulars connected with the fair rent should be given to the parties. At present all that the parties were allowed to know was the amount of the fair rent; and no doubt they found in the valuer's report a specification of the improvements which were held to be those of the tenant. But they did not know what capital value had been attached to them, what percentages were allowed, or what amount had been deducted, by reason of the improvements made by the tenant in occupation, from what would have been the fair rent for an incoming tenant. This information was very material. The Court ought to state what was the fair annual value of a holding as for a solvent tenant entering the holding, and having no interest in it, the holding being valued land and buildings together. In Ireland alone, of all civilised countries of the world, the system was pursued of valuing the land and buildings of agricultural holdings separately. It was obvious that such buildings could never be let or sold apart from the land. As the land in Ireland was valued upon a system which took note of the different qualities of land on a holding, and applied a rent to each based on the value of the produce, and as the buildings as well as the land entered into the value of the produce, it was evident that under the present system of valuation in Ireland the Sub-Commissioners, though they declared that they ignored the buildings, did really take them into account. Therefore, when the buildings were the tenant's, he was obliged to pay rent on them, and when they were the landlord's, he was obliged to pay rent on them twice. With regard to the proposal for the evicted tenants, he could not agree that it was to be regarded as a substitution of the Bill of last year. The Bill of last year had not been abandoned, but maintained. It could not be drafted upon the present measure with a reasonable prospect of success; but when that Bill was rejected, it was said that the proposal of a voluntary measure would be gladly entertained. The present measure was voluntary. If it passed into law with the evicted tenants clause in it, and if it settled the question, the Bill of last year would be no longer required. But, on the other hand, if by the action of those who invited a voluntary measure the clause was found to be inoperative, then the necessity for the Bill of last year would continue. That, he believed, would be admitted by the Chief Secretary, who would then urge forward the Bill by every means in his power. Some of those who affected a concern for the welfare of the evicted tenants had declared their unwillingness to give them any financial assistance by the Bill. But if they desired the end they must desire the means. Remembering that under the Bill of last year the landlord had in every case the option of purchase, that the evicted tenants were destitute, that they would need assistance on re-entry, and that new tenants would have to be dealt with, he saw no reason for withholding financial assistance. The circumstances of the present scheme showed no such difference from those of last year's scheme to entitle the Chief Secretary to omit the financial provision from the Bill. The main body of the Irish Members would encourage the insertion of such a financial provision and would sustain it. As to the simplification of procedure, economy and expedition were both important, but there was one thing more important beyond all comparison—namely, that the fullest security which the law could afford, by investigation of the circumstances of each case, should be allowed to the parties concerned. Expedition and economy were not to be purchased at the expense of justice. It had been suggested that some sliding scale should be adopted on the principle of the Act of 1887. The scheme of that Act was welcome as a rough-and-ready and temporary remedy for an extremely urgent condition of affairs; but regarded as a permanent measure, that scheme did not rest upon any defensible basis. It was to reduce rents in proportion to the fall of prices; but it was obvious that a fall of prices meant a greater fall in rent, and not a merely proportionate fall. Supposing that the produce of a farm was worth £150 a year, that £50 went for the cost of production, £50 for the subsistence of the tenant, and £50 for rent; and supposing that prices fell by one-third. There would be only £100 of the £150 left. Assuming that the cost of production and the tenant's subsistence allowance remained the same, the economic rent would be at once exhausted. But the scheme of the Act of 1887 was that, when prices fell one-third, rent should fall one-third. So that under the plan of the right hon. Gentleman one-third of the loss would fall on the landlord and two-thirds on the tenant. It was evident that a rough-and-ready remedy of that kind could not apply to a case of such emergency, could not even be mentioned in a discussion which was directed to the devising of a permanent remedy. As to the scheme of referring the price to the Land Commission, if the parties were to be bound to accept their determination as final, such a scheme would never be accepted. If the parties were to be bound to accept the determination of a body of gentlemen appointed by the late Ministers, the scheme would certainly not be regarded with confidence by the tenants. He was quite ready to reconsider the suggestion contained in the Report, that the parties might invite a valuer and, if they pleased, accept his arrangement, and, if not, might go before an ordinary sub-Commission which would include men appointed both by the late Government and by the present Government. In conclusion he would say that this Bill, which was undoubtedly founded upon equity and which was necessary to rescue the intentions of the House from ambiguity, would certainly pass the House, and pass it by virtue of a strong and solid preponderance of opinion in its favour. If it was rejected in another place, having regard to the strength and universality of public opinion in Ireland, the tenants of Ireland would not be those who had the most cause for regret. *The Times* declared a day or two ago, and the declaration was repeated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham last night, that the true path of deliverence for the Irish landlords lay in the extension of purchase. Let the House observe that in the judgment of *The Times* and of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham it was the Irish landlords who were in need of deliverance. He was not disposed to quarrel with that phrase. He had already pointed out that while the first principle of the Land League was to put an end to rack-renting, the second principle was to enable every tenant on fair terms to become the owner of his holding. He did not deny that the path of deliverance for Irish landlords lay in the extension of purchase ; but could purchase be extended by such a device as that suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, to remove from the Act of 1891 the excessive, cumulative, and offensive guarantee placed in it by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition ? The House might pass purchase Acts, but the question whether they would have any effect depended on the tenants of Ireland ; and if, as *The Times* said, the true path of deliverance for Irish landlords lay in the extension of purchase, that true path would not be found by the landlords except upon conditions which obtained the concurrence of the tenants. Before they attempted to raise the superstructure of purchase they must lay down the basis of fair rents. So long as the interest of the tenant in his holding was disregarded in fixing the amount of his rent, so long as the law in Ireland conspired with a class who for 200 years had had absolute lordship over the land in Ireland, and who, if their connection with Ireland terminated to-morrow would leave no beneficial traces of their lordship, by technicalities, by subtlety, by chicane, by manipulative presumption, by considerations of tenure, by refinements between percentage and letting value—so long as this continued, so long as the tenant was charged rent on what belonged to him, so long it would be impossible to extend the policy of purchase. He said, therefore, that it would be requisite, not simply to take away unnecessary guarantees, but before the state of the land question could be fundamentally altered it would be necessary, either by the adoption of this Bill, or by the adoption hereafter of some more comprehensive measure, to secure that the rents of tenants in Ireland should not include one penny of charge on property that was theirs. When that was done, and not before, they might bridge over the gulf that existed between the difficult ground on which the landlords stood at present and what had been called the "true path of deliverance."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) : The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has, in various portions of his speech, held out the agreeable prospect of a long series of future proposals for land legislation in Ireland. Even if this Bill were passed in its present form, there are various other proposals which he would desire this year, next year, or at some future time to bring before the House. But, not only so, we are not even to be relieved from the necessity of an Evicted Tenants Bill by the clause which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced into the present Bill, and in regard to that last statement I should like to put a definite question to the Government. They have introduced a clause into this Bill which deals with evicted tenants. Is it or is it not a solution of the question ? Does it or does it not, in the view of the Government, promise an adequate solution of this question, or do the Government hold the view of the hon. Member who has just sat down, who has said that the necessity for the Bill of last year is not mitigated, certainly not removed, by the introduction of this Bill ?

MR. SEXTON : What I said was that the question would depend on the action of the Irish landlords and on the offer of a voluntary arrangement.

Mr. BALFOUR: I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that the necessity for the Bill would not be removed by the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. SEXTON: Not by the introduction.

Mr. BALFOUR: Well, by the passage of this Bill. If the hon. Gentleman did say so, I should like to know what the Government think of that, because, if we are to have further legislation on this subject, I think it would be unfortunate to burden an already overweighted measure with any such proposal. I have watched the course of the Government with regard to this Bill with something like extreme amazement. I have always recognised that some Bill was absolutely necessary, or if not absolutely necessary so desirable that it certainly was the duty of any Government to attempt to deal with these necessary questions, which have been brought up by the fact that we have now almost reached the end of the judicial term of 15 years. The measure which I anticipated was a measure which would make the proceedings in the Land Courts less costly and less slow, and which would clear up and make unmistakable the principles of the Act of 1881; and would introduce no new principles for discussion in this House. But what do I find? I find that the Bill, instead of cheapening procedure, will make it more costly, and that instead of lightening the labours of the Commission it will so increase them as to overweigh, if not to crush that department. There is no suggestion in the Bill for making procedure either cheap or expeditious. The Bill, instead of clearing up the difficulties of the Act of 1881, introduces a whole group of new difficulties of its own, and the unfortunate Chief Commissioners and sub-Commissioners will be even more confused by the ill-expressed principles and vague wording of this measure than they were by the loose terminology of the Act of 1881. Whilst I find that this Bill contains all these defects, I find that it involves in addition a superfluous and unnecessary re-opening of the Irish land question, and that it will therefore compel the House to again go over the weary ground of the exact principles upon which judicial rents ought to be fixed. I am astonished at the course taken by the Government, not merely from an Irish point of view, but from an English point of view. The Government must know quite well that it would have been possible to introduce a Bill which would have met the necessities of the case, and excited but little controversy in this House. They have chosen, however, to prepare a Bill containing proposals which must excite the utmost bitterness of feeling between various sections in this House and in Ireland, and they must know that the time that will be taken up by the consideration of the band of heterogeneous suggestions which they offer for our acceptance will make a very large hole indeed in the Session. From an English point of view that is bad policy. We surely have devoted enough time in the past to the tenants of Irish land. The Government told us in the Queen's Speech that they had pigeonholed in their offices measures which, in their judgment would do great good to agriculture in England, now languishing in a condition of distress absolutely unparalleled in the last two or three generations. But it appears that, rather than bring in a simple Bill with regard to Irish land, which could be passed with comparative rapidity, and which would leave room for other Irish Bills, the Government prefer to overlook the needs of agriculture, and I suppose we are now to spend June, July, and part of August in a wearying and arid discussion of the everlasting claims of hon. Members below the Gangway. I hope English electors will take note of the distribution of Parliamentary time which the Government think it advisable to make. But I pass from the English aspect of the case, which, however, is well worthy of the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and of which I hope they will hear more anon in other places. I pass from that to the effect that the scheme of legislation proposed by the Government will have upon Ireland. I remember Lord Spencer's making a speech in 1884, in which he endeavoured to explain, acting as the mouthpiece of the right hon. Member for Midlothian, to the Irish tenants that, as far as the fixing of fair rents was concerned, they must not expect any further intervention on the part of this House; but since then there has been the Act of 1887, for which I was responsible, and we are now threatened with this fresh legislation. The Act of 1887 had in view the sort of object which the Government ought to have had in view when they determined to introduce their measure this year. It was intended to make workable the Act of 1881, which was only tolerable to reasonable and practical men when it was regarded as a bridge between the old state of things in Ireland and the state of things which we all, I believe, now desire to see introduced—namely, a large system of peasant proprietary. I may say in passing that when the hon. Member who has just sat down gave to the Land League the whole credit for the invention of the purchase system, he went beyond the facts of the case, because the principle of land purchase had been embodied in our Legislation some years before the Land League was thought of. Politicians were convinced long before the agitation of 1880 that in land purchase lay the proper solution of the Irish Land Question. The hon. Member seemed to me to be as infelicitous in that historical commentary upon the history of the Land League as he was with reference to the Land League card and prospectus. If the League had never done more than to issue that card and prospectus, and had tried to carry out the objects therein specified by legitimate methods, I should have been delighted to join. We all know that in the history of the Land League the card of membership and the prospectus occupy a very small and insignificant place. But what I am endeavouring to lay before the House is this—that the system of valuing rents in Ireland by a Land Court is necessarily and intrinsically demoralising, and that it is only tolerable and possible as a transition. The Chief Secretary alluded distantly in his speech the other day to the case of India, where it is the fact that the Indian officials of the Home Government do in large provinces fix the land tax, which is equivalent to the rent of the land. But what parallel is there between the case of India and the case of Ireland? In India you have a dominant race absolutely free from party distinctions and party quarrels, who are animated by no desire except to get a fair revenue for the Government and to do justice to the ryot, undisturbed by any such influences, governmental or judicial, as necessarily have free play in Ireland. In regard to Ireland, what is the state of things? If a gentleman gets up in this House and argues, be it never so fairly, that some particular proposal supposed to be in favour of the tenants is intrinsically unjust, he is at once attacked as being a landlords' advocate, a landlords' man, and goodness knows what besides. The hon. Member who spoke last told us that the tenant would think it a very poor boon to be sent before a Court of Appeal composed of sub-Commissioners appointed by the late Government. No doubt the hon. Member thinks that, and no doubt persons who differ from him might think that Commissioners appointed by another Government might be hostile to the landlords. [An Irish Member: "Let the Commissioners be half on one side, half on the other."] What a strange idea of justice to propose that half the number of Judges, half the number of judicial Commissioners, should belong to the landlord party and the other half to the tenants' party! If that were the system no doubt the average reduction of rents might be fair in a way; but how about the particular reduction in each individual case? Half the tenants would be paying too little and half would be paying too much. To hold out to any community engaged in agriculture only that if they return a particular person to Parliament he will, in so far as in him lies, promote legislation favourable to the class that returns him, and do his best to keep in power a Government presumed to be in favour of that class, would be a most demoralising condition of things to which no unhappy country ought ever to be subjected. I cannot help thinking that the Government, by reopening the principles of the Act of 1881, and not contenting themselves with filling up the details and building up the structure of that necessarily incomplete effort, have done a great deal to foment and perpetuate a state of things which is intrinsically intolerable. I would point out one of the effects of this legislation upon the ultimate solution of this question. What did the hon. Member who has just sat down practically say? He advised the tenants of Ireland not to purchase their holdings until the utmost had been squeezed out of the landlords by Legislation. What he said amounted to this—Hold your hand; do not purchase. There can be no sales unless you consent to buy, and do not consent to do so while a substantial hope remains that by our pressure in the House of Commons we may squeeze out of some soft-hearted Government, some Government sensitive to votes, a little more favourable machinery for adjusting that fair rent on which, after all, the amount of your purchase-money will depend. That is deplorable advice. I have said that in my judgment this Bill reopens the principle or some of the principles of the Act of 1881. If anything is clear from the statements of the Minister who brought in the Act of 1881, it is clear he had no notion whatever of occupation-right as it is now applied by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. I should have been ready to leave the intentions of the framers of the Act of 1881 alone, and not discuss their policy, but if you insist upon re-opening the question we are bound to go behind the letter of that Act, and look at the intentions of the framers, and we are bound to consider whether the intentions of those framers really were in all respects consonant with justice. Take the case of occupation right. Is it possible for the House to absolve itself from the duty of considering whether occupation-right as defined by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and apparently recognised by a few, though not by all, of the sub-Commissioners, is consonant with justice. [Mr. SEXTON: "By the head of the Land Commission."] All Judge Bewley said was that, according to the action of many of the sub-Commissioners, occupation-right was recogniesd.

MR. SEXTON: He recognised it in his own Court.

MR. BALFOUR: If you re-open the question whether the wording of the Act of 1881 carries out the intention of the original framers, and, if it does, whether it is consonant with justice, I say occupation-right as defined by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway is not consonant with the expressed intentions of the framers of the Act, and it is not consonant with the principles of justice. Give the tenant his improvement; give it him fully, and give it him honestly, but occupation-right, which appears to be, as far as I can understand it, the capitalised value—[Mr. SEXTON: "No."]—well a money equivalent for the privilege of not being turned out—a money equivalent in the form of a reduction of rent given in addition to, or on account of, some privilege with regard to not being turned out without compensation, has no foundation in common-sense, in justice, or in any properly interpreted speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, and I cannot believe that when this House really looks at the question, as it will have to look at it in all lights, it will be content to give the Irish occupier something he is certainly not entitled to. I now come to the burning question of improvements, and here I must make allusion to the able speech a learned countryman of mine delivered earlier in the afternoon. The Solicitor-General for Scotland, in the last part of his eloquent address, made a comparison between the Highlands of Scotland under the Crofters Act and Ireland under the Act of 1881. He read us a long and very interesting extract from the report of the Crofters' Commission. He told us that, while we might go through the Highlands and find contentment and improvement everywhere, Ireland was still in disturbance, still clamouring for fresh legislation, still suffering from injustice, and the distinction between the two cases he found in this, and in this only—that in Ireland the compensation for improvements was fixed on the principle settled in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, while in the Highlands it was fixed upon some general principles. That really is a most preposterous theory to advance. In the first place, the differences between the Highlands and Ireland are countless. There is no doubt a great community of race and the languages are allied, but the history and the traditions and the circumstances which have moulded the national character are absolutely different in the two cases. To assert that the only difference between the two is adequately found in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath is to put too great a strain upon our imagination. Let him remember the principal point of complaint which is made with regard to the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath. It is that the tenant in Ireland has not got, in the form of compensation, for his improvements, more than what is equivalent to interest on the capital value. The number of cases in which the increased value of the holding is in excess of the interest upon the capital value of the improvement must be relatively insignificant; and to tell us that the few cases in which the tenant has made an improvement, bringing into the holding an enormously increased value, part of which has been absorbed by the landlord, makes a distinction between Inverness and Galway, is a view of the effects of legislation which those who have more carefully studied it than the hon. and learned Gentleman has had an opportunity of doing can hardly accept even from him. The case of Adams *v.* Dunseath has become a terror. I do not mean to dwell upon any technicalities, but there is a broad principle of justice underlying it which I am only bound to look at. I detect considerable differences between the utterances on the Government Bench on the subject. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant gave us to understand that he perfectly recognised the rights of the landlord in what are called the original properties of the soil, and in such a case as that of, let us say, the draining of a lake at a small expense and trebling the value of a holding thereby—I take the extreme case because it is always convenient for illustration—he does not propose by his Bill to give to the tenant all the increased value which would accrue in consequence of the improvement. That may be the intention of the right hon. Gentleman—I do not now inquire how far it is carried out by the wording of the Bill—but the Solicitor General for Scotland went, if I may use a vulgar expression, "the whole hog;" he went as far as the hon. Member for North Kerry, and said distinctly the tenant had a right to every increased value, no matter what it might be, which resulted from any operation which he had undertaken.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND said, he was not aware that he laid that down in substance, but he cited a judgment of Chief Baron Pallas in the opposite sense.

MR. BALFOUR: I am even now in doubt, but if I am to accept the intervention of the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Members of the Treasury Bench are absolutely agreed, and are not of opinion that the tenant has a right to such results of improvements, then they are at loggerheads with their supporters below the Gangway. The hon. Member for North Kerry, who is always lucid, who always expresses his opinions in language which is not capable of misinterpretation—a quality not always shared by the Front Bench opposite—has told us in absolutely uncompromising language that the tenant in Ireland has a right to every result, no matter what it may be, which follows from the increased value given to the holding by his improvements. I think there ought to be some agreement between the supporters of the Government. To my mind the equities of the case seem perfectly clear. I am unable to understand why it is that the tenant is to have more than the full value of that which he has put into the soil. Possibly the reduction of rent may be insufficient to meet the interest on capital and the repayment of capital. That is a matter with which I have nothing to do, but that it should do more than that upon a liberal scale appears to me to be unjustifiable upon any theory of landed property whatsoever; and if you are going to say that the tenant has a right to this unearned increase as to the result of improvements, I want to know why the tenant is to monopolise them. A farmer has the tenancy for the judicial term of 15 years of a holding in which there is a large sheet of water which can be readily drained at a small cost and labour. He employs a few men at 8s. or 9s. a week to do the work. I cannot conceive why these men are not to share in the unearned increment which accrues to the holding from that operation. Why is it to go to the tenant rather than to the labourer, or why to the labourer rather than, as Mr. George advocates, to the community? If you are to have private property in land, that private property covers such a case of unearned increment as I have described. But if you are not to have private property in land I cannot conceive how the tenant has any more right to the unnearned increment than the labourer; or the labourer any more right than the community at large; and the community at large, if you go to that, any more right than the whole family of the human race. The Chief Secretary, who differs from the hon. Member for Kerry on the point, is going to introduce into the Bill words which he thinks will meet the difficulty. These words are: "having regard to the circumstances of the case."

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not say these are to be the exact words.

MR. BALFOUR: But there are words to be introduced of that general tenour which it is supposed will obviate the difficulty to which I have referred. What we have suffered from is the turning of men on to the lands to settle judicial rents without giving them any principle whatever by which to come to a decision. The Solicitor General for Scotland told us to-day that the duty of the Irish Land Courts was to find the value of the land apart from competition. There is no such thing as value apart from competition. It is a pure fiction of the imagination. And to ask valuers to find out the value of a thing apart from competition is to ask them to square the circle or to do any other impossible operation. What you ask the valuers to do is to form some idea in their own minds as to what the competition value would be if you had only rational tenants or rational bidders for the farms. That is the task which you have set these unhappy men to do, and you have given them no guidance in the Bill; and the every-day guidance they would obtain from experience is getting every day more remote. But having started upon this strange career of getting to the root of the ills of Ireland by asking people to determine what competition value reasonable tenants would give for a farm, you stop short in your career, for you take no steps whatever to find out what a rational bidder for tenant-right would pay. What will be the result? If you allow this system of fixing rents to go on for an indefinite period, you will have all the evils of the old land hunger coming back in a more insidious, but not less formidable, form. I do not know whether the Government intend to introduce provisions which will prevent those excessive sums being given for farms. I do not hear any responsive observation from any Member of the Government. Then I defy any of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite to give any reason why the Courts which settle the rent should not also settle the tenant-right, except that the tenants want the one and do not want the other. I will not say that it is not a good Parliamentary reason; but I do most emphatically say it is a very bad reason in argument, and it only points the moral which I have endeavoured to force on the House—that we are acting criminally if we do anything by our Legislation to arouse in the minds of the tenants the idea that if they only send a sufficient number of representatives to this House, and get a sufficiently squeezable Government in Office, there is no limit to the amount of concession they may extract from Parliament. But my main objection to the Bill is, that it diverts us from attaining to that healthy condition of agricultural Ireland to which we must absolutely look as the only possible solution of the difficulty. With land purchase I began my speech. I return to land purchase again at its conclusion. If hon. Gentlemen below the Ganway are sincere—and I would be the last to question their sincerity—in desiring Home Rule for Ireland, I tell them that probably amongst the subsidiary objections, but not the main objection, which we feel to it is the conviction of the intolerable injustice which would necessarily follow on leaving to a purely Irish Parliament the settlement of such questions as those which the Chief Secretary has raised by his Bill. I do not say that even in this House, constituted as it is, all classes in Ireland could be absolutely secure of receiving justice. I do not believe that to any assembly chosen, as we are chosen, by a democratic vote, and influenced as we must necessarily be influenced by Party considerations, would it be safe to intrust pecuniary interests in competition between various classes of the community. It is, at any rate, a very doubtful point. But I am sure such interests could not be intrusted to an Irish Parliament without gross wrong being inflicted. There are those who may be indifferent to that wrong; who may look upon it with absolute equanimity; who may regard it perhaps as the legitimate Nemesis for those imaginary centuries of oppression, which they are never weary of trotting out to the House; but even they must feel that, until you put an end to this perpetual Parliamentary warfare in regard to the rights of different classes to the soil of Ireland, by creating a large peasant proprietary in Ireland who would be as much interested in the maintenance of the rights of property as any class of the community, we can never hope for peace in Ireland; and we can never hope to be relieved from the intolerable burden which those perpetual discussions place upon us. I assent to the Second Reading of the Bill, because, in one sense, I admit that it is necessary. I admit, further, that many of the clauses of the Bill would, with a little amendment, do the necessary repair and patching to the original fabric of 1881. But my assent to the Second Reading must not be taken as implying that I approve of such modification of the principles of the Act of 1881 as the Government have rashly introduced; and when the time comes, both in Committee and on the Third Reading, unless, indeed, in Committee we can repair the wrong the Government are attempting to do, I shall consider it my duty to oppose to the utmost of my power a policy which is not merely a burden on the time of the British Parliament, but is an intolerable wrong to the very classes whom it intends to benefit.

*MR. LEONARD H. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, the House had now been engaged for three long sittings discussing this Bill. His right hon. Friend who had just sat down had said he assented to the Second Reading, but that he objected to certain things in the Bill, and that unless they were altered or modified he might be led at a subsequent stage to take up an attitude of opposition to the Bill which he did not now occupy. But if they were to conduct future discussions of the Bill in the same fashion as they had conducted the debate on its Second Reading, he feared for the ultimate fate of the measure. They had had, as he had said, three long sittings, and the only thing that had come out of those sittings appeared to him to be this—that they had made many speeches without having come to any kind of understanding with one another as to what was the real subject of dispute between them, or to any kind of conference so as to arrive at a mutual agreement in regard to the Bill. His right hon. Friend who had just sat down had said that the Members of the Treasury Bench had not themselves come to an agreement with one another and had not sounded the great difficulties of the situation. With the first suggestion he could not agree; but he had followed the very able speech of the Solicitor General for Scotland, who had shown a great mastery of the subject, and the earlier speech of the Chief Secretary, and he thought he detected in both those productions this painful truth, that neither speaker had got to the root of the difficulty. They had been discussing the question of the allowance to the tenant in respect to the improvements he had made to his holding. What was the rule which was to govern what the tenant was to receive? The Chief Secretary, whilst impugning the doctrines of the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath and claiming for the tenant everything attributable to the improvements he had made, broached this case. The right hon. Gentleman said that an improvement might be made at a small cost by draining a hillside, producing a value to the farm occupied quite inconsistent with the cost of the operation, and he said that in that special case the landlord was entitled to a portion of the result. If that was true, then Adams *v.* Dunseath was upheld. That was the doctrine of Adams *v.* Dunseath. The Solicitor General for Scotland had also quoted a judgment by Mr. Sheriff Brand, which, whilst very amiable and very well-intentioned, left absolutely unsolved the critical question of whether, where there was a margin over what might be called the market remuneration for the expenditure made by the tenant to produce certain results, any part of that margin was to go to the landlord. That was the old difficulty which had been fought in Ireland for many years. That was the trouble at the root of the discussions before the Act of 1881 was brought in, and it was the trouble which even now, he regretted to say, the Chief Secretary and the Solicitor General for Scotland had not fathomed. If they allowed, under any circumstances, that the landlord was to come in and say to the tenant, "This operation of yours has been more remunerative and produced results beyond what you could possibly have imagined; I will allow you to claim what will remunerate you for your labour and trouble and expenditure, and something also for the risk you ran and the enterprise you showed, but beyond this I claim the balance myself," then it would bring in exactly what was decided according to Lord Justice Fitz Gibbon in Adams *v.* Dunseath. According to the view Lord Justice Fitz Gibbon took of that judgment the tenant was entitled to full interest on the full amount of what he had paid, to full reward for his energy and enterprise, and he said if there was something over the tenant was entitled to part of that too. Upon what principle this last apportionment was to be settled he did not know, and nobody had ever explained. The whole secret of the question at issue was involved in this. If there was such a balance over, would they give it to the tenant altogether, or would they partition it on some unknown method between landlord and tenant? Should they ever settle a question of this kind—obviously one of the most intricate and difficult—by hostile talk one against another? If there was a question to be settled and a difficulty to be got through, they must attack it in some other method. Much had been said as to what was intended by the Act of 1881. He remembered well when that Act was passing through the House what were the most frequent observations of one Member of the Cabinet about it. This right hon. Gentleman said it was like the Athanasian Creed—"something we none of us understand, but which we all believe in." He had watched, in a much more subordinate position, the progress of that issue, and he confessed he thought himself that his right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian did not quite see what was certain to come out of the Act even if it was not there already. And what appeared to him to be the only way of settling the question was to look upon that Act as something which created a sort of copyhold tenure by which the then existing tenants would be retained in possession at rents which might be valued or revalued at the end of each statutory term, and in the revaluation nothing should be taken into account except the unearned increment. So that at the end of 15 years the valuer who had to re-value the farm would say that if it was let at that date, quite apart from all the tenant had done, it would let at so much, and that what the tenant had done and the whole effect of it would belong to the tenant. That, with the abolition also of the right of pre-emption, would be the realisation of the three F's. That plan was, no doubt, open to the criticism of his right hon. Friend opposite, that it failed utterly as an attempt to defy and destroy competition. That was true. Competition could not be destroyed. As long as they had individual rights and individual property, competition must and would assert itself. Moreover, it must be conceded that what was taken from the landlord was given to the tenant in possession, and in no way to his successors purchasing from him. With free sale the pecuniary gain would be realised by the man in occupation at the time. But the great advantage of the change he had endeavoured to describe was this—that they had removed the conditions of competition from the relations between landlord and tenant, and all the rights which accompanied those relations on the part of the landlord, which had been derived from feudal laws, but which still subsisted, were rejected; and they transferred what was open to competition to a free contract between the person who bought and the person who sold. They could not destroy that, but they could reduce the relations between landlord and tenant to the position he had described, by which the landlord would be a rent-charger with a rent-charge capable of being modified from time to time in consequence of the development and condition of the country, apart from any action of the tenant. It was intended in regard to the Irish Land Question, for great reasons of State, and as an Act of State, to do something which did involve a transfer by the Act of 1881; but the doctrines laid down by the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath had, it was said, been such as to undo a great act of State. How were they to get out of the difficulty? Here was a Bill involving the deepest issues, which was to be discussed in a Committee of this House, then read a third time and sent to the other House, to be exposed there to such criticism and attack in consideration of details as they could all understand, and to receive such defence as the supporters of the Bill might look for, and look for in vain. A noble friend of his, Lord Monteagle, indicated in a recent article in *The Nineteenth Century* a very practical method of procedure, involving, however, a new departure in the procedure of the House. He said:—

> "Take this Bill, and refer it after Second Reading to a Joint Committee of the two Houses."

What was involved in that? They lost no control over the Bill; after being considered by the Joint Committee, it came back to be considered in Comitteee of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who would have a majority on the Committee?

MR. COURTNEY said, he would come to that, but he was not dealing with the subject in a polemical way. The Bill would come back to the House, and they should have complete authority over it in Committee, and in the Third Reading. They would then carry it to the other House, where it had already been considered by a certain number of Peers sitting in Council with a certain number of Members of this House. The hon. Member for Louth asked who would have a majority? No doubt the possibility of any good coming out of this procedure would depend upon the manner in which it was worked. If the ordinary course of procedure were adopted, there would be an equal number of Representatives of both Houses. But of course it would be essential, before the Government consented to refer the Bill to a Joint Committee, to come to an understanding so that the Committee so composed should not be unduly balanced on one side or the other, but should really afford the promise of a deliberate Committee coming together in a practical spirit to consider practical questions. Was it hopeless that such a suggestion should be considered? Probably at first there might be suspicions that the procedure might be misused; there might even be a feeling on the part of some Members of the House that they would not consider any proposal which would so much as involve the co-operation of the Peers in the legislation of the land. He hoped they should not hear very much of that kind of argument. If the Government got any promise of the Bill being fairly entered upon and fairly carried through by a Joint Committee, consider the prospect they would get of achieving a satisfactory result. Consider the effect it would have upon subsequent stages in this House itself. This House would, as he had said, have complete control. The Bill would come back, as far as the law and practice were concerned, and the power of the House to deal with it, as if it had never been considered elsewhere; but it would come back with great authority, and that great authority would have a moral influence on the conduct of subsequent debate here. Then, of course, they should hear no more of rejecting the Bill on Second Reading in the Lords. He thanked the House for having allowed him to submit what he thought deserved to be seriously considered as a means of rescuing Parliament from the working out of a problem the difficulties of which they must all recognise were enormous—a problem which would never be solved unless they were able to secure the co-operation of men of different minds, approaching it through different experiences and different modes of thinking and of opinion.

Bill read 2°.

### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BILL.

*On the Motion of Mr. HERBERT GARDNER Bill read 2°.

Sitting suspended at Five minutes before Seven o'clock.

## EVENING SITTING.

The Sitting was resumed at Nine of the Clock.

### A SECOND BALLOT AT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

On the Motion to go into Committee of Supply—

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs), rose to move :—

> "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that provision should be made for a

second ballot at Parliamentary elections in all cases where no candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes recorded."

He said it would be admitted that the central idea governing our representative system was that a majority of the electors in a constituency should have the power of selecting a representative in this House. It would not be denied that in a certain number of constituencies, through the multiplicity of candidates, it had been impossible to secure the representation of a majority of the electors. In the Parliament of 1874 there were no less than 13 members who represented a minority of the electors who took part in the contest in their respective constituencies. In the present Parliament there were 12 members who represented a minority of the electors who voted at the election. The constituencies were South Salford, West Bradford, Middlesbrough, Camlachie Division of Glasgow, Tradeston Division of Glasgow, City of Perth, St. Stephen's Green Division of Dublin, Halifax, Mid Lanark, and the Attercliffe Division of Sheffield. Upon the existing facts the question was one deserving the attention of Parliament, but in addition to that it had a very important bearing upon certain promised legislation. He would say nothing in regard to the payment of Members. He was afraid the attitude of the Government hardly justified him in assuming that that reform would become law within a short space of time, but a Bill was promised for the purpose of placing the expenses of Parliamentary elections upon the rates, and when that Bill became law it would be much easier for a man to become a candidate than it was at the present time. He did not himself believe that the payment of Members and of returning officers' expenses would add to the number of candidates, but many Members did not share his view, and his proposal must therefore be considered not merely with regard to the grievance which existed, but with regard to the legislation which was promised during the present Session by the Government. In single-Member constituencies his proposal would only apply where there three or more candidates. If there were three candidates, and the first received 2,000 votes, the second 1,500, and the third 1,000, the candidate at the head of the poll had no claim to represent the constituency, and what he proposed was the candidate at the bottom of the poll should stand out, and that another election should take place between the first and second candidates. In the case of a double-member constituency a second ballot would operate in practically the same way. If there were five candidates, and if one polled as many as three others, of course he would be returned, but if the second candidate did not poll as many as the three others, a single election would take place between him and the candidate next to him. Though the question was new so far as this country was concerned, it was by no means new in foreign countries. In Germany the exact proposal which he now made had been in force since 1869. The clause in the German Act of that year providing for a second ballot was as follows:—

> "Election is direct. A candidate is elected if he has obtained an absolute majority of all the votes recorded in his constituency. If no single candidate obtains an absolute majority of votes, the two who have most votes must be balloted for again."

Of the Members of the German Reichstag at the present time, 180 were elected after a second ballot, but they knew that in Germany parties were split up much more than they were in this country, and he could not conceive that it would be necessary to have so many second ballots here. In France the second ballot had been in force since 1875. It operated in two different sets of circumstances, first where a candidate did not obtain an absolute majority of the votes given; and secondly, where the highest candidate did not poll one-fourth of the electors on the roll. The system also operated in Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Italy. In America the different States settled the matter according to the wishes of a majority of the electors there. But with regard to the election of the President and Vice-President this principle was in force. It might be objected that a second ballot would increase the cost of elections, which were quite costly enough at present, but he believed that in present circumstances, and without reference to the promised legislation to which he had referred, the increased cost would be comparatively small. It would not be necessary for candidates to hold any additional meetings, and the only extra expense would be the postage of some election literature to the electors. It might be urged that electors would not go to the poll a second time, but they could only differ as to whether the carrying of this proposal would have that effect. It certainly had not that effect abroad. Certainly in Germany there had been notable instances of electors not taking part in the second contest, but he thought there had, in those cases, been local circumstances to account for their want of action; and in some cases in Germany the number of persons who voted at second elections had been in excess of the number who voted at the first ballot. Then, it was also said that the proposal would increase the number of candidates, but, for his part, he welcomed a greater number of candidates. He thought he had mentioned the more formidable objections. There was, he knew, an alternative proposal, which was, that, without resorting to a second ballot at all, the object of a second ballot could be met. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) had suggested that, in the case of three candidates the electors should be instructed to mark opposite the name of the candidate whom they most desired the figure "1," and that they should mark with the figure "2" the name of the candidate whom they next preferred. That was a very ingenious proposal, but he doubted whether the electors could be made to understand it with sufficient clearness to get at the real mind of the constituency. For his own part, he thought it better to let all the candidates go to the poll at the first election and then to have a fair and square contest between the two candidates at the head of the poll, and rest the election on the result of the second contest. This was not a party question. It was not for him to go into the domestic differences of Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, but he thought the proposal might commend itself to them as well as to Liberals. If a Conservative and Liberal Unionist were fighting a seat, it might be possible, by a split in the Unionist vote, for the Radical candidate to be returned for a Unionist constituency. He therefore asked hon. Members opposite and those behind him to support the present proposal, especially in view of the light of possible contingencies in the future. He had an authority in his favour which those hon. Gentlemen would regard with great respect. The Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had fully committed himself to the principle of the proposal now before the House. Writing to the Secretary of the Romford Liberal Association, the right hon. Gentleman had said:—

> "I am entirely in favour of the second ballot as practised in France, and should like to see it tried in this country. I have never heard any objection to it, and it is, of course, the best way of ascertaining beforehand the opinion of the majority."

AN HON. MEMBER: When?

MR. DALZIEL: It was in 1885.—[*Cries of* "Oh!"]—Well, of course, he admired a statesman who spoke, not for the moment, but for all time. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would not vote against his proposal. The reasons on which he grounded it were that under the present system, without a second ballot, it was possible for the minority, and not the majority, in a constituency to be represented in Parliament, and that, in order to have a majority representation and Government, it was both desirable and expedient that a second ballot should be brought into operation. He concluded by moving his Resolution.

*MR. W. H. HOLLAND (Salford, N.), said, although his hon. Friend had made it clear that there was need for a second ballot, he had made it equally clear that there was no need for a second speech in its support. There used to be an old electioneering rule which said that a voter ought to vote early and often. This Resolution would not require that a voter should vote often, but that he should vote twice in certain cases. He felt certain that there was, at the present time, a large volume of public opinion in favour of second ballots. He had been privileged, last year and this, to introduce a Bill dealing with this question, and all the newspaper comments which he had seen were entirely in favour of its provisions. He had also mentioned the subject at public meetings, and it had been eagerly taken up by the audience and had met with their hearty approval. A week ago the Solicitor General attended a meeting at Manchester, at which he was privileged to take the chair, and, in the course of the few remarks which he offered at the opening of the meeting, no question mentioned was so eagerly caught up and approved by the audience as the second ballot. If he were asked how this question had made such rapid progress in the last few years, he would say that it was because the independent labour movement had so increased. They found the Independent Labour Party were in favour of the second ballot, and it had also been approved by the Trades Union Congress, he believed, at their annual meeting. Although he had had to withdraw his Bill in favour of this Resolution, he hoped it would not be withdrawn for long, but that the Government would see their way to incorporate it in their programme. Some persons disliked the principle of the second ballot on the ground, as they had put it to him, that one ballot was enough, in all conscience. That would be true, if the convenience of Members of Parliament were the chief concern; but hon. Members' convenience was absolutely of no account in comparison with making the House of Commons more truly representative than at present. It was extremely desirable that the wishes of the constituencies should be mirrored in that House as accurately as possible. In some cases there had certainly been a distinct failing to have that correct mirroring, and he thought there was a prospect of this occurring more frequently in the future. In 1882, a Bill dealing partly with this question was introduced, and received the sanction of the House of Commons by a majority of two. In the interval, many changes had occurred. The franchise had been greatly enlarged, and education had also made very rapid strides. He thought that, with a wider franchise, they could not fail to have a wider interest taken in political questions, and, that the better educated an electorate were, the more intelligent must be their views on political questions. He thought it reasonable that electors holding diverse views should be anxious to know to what extent their own views were supported in their own constituency; and yet, without a second ballot, it was a ruinous price to pay when that could only be ascertained at the cost of putting in a political opponent. He did not suppose that hon. Gentlemen opposite—there were not many of them present—would favour the principle of a second ballot, because, from the figures already presented to the House, he thought they would see that their position would probably have been weakened in this Parliament if a second ballot had been in force. He thought that the Resolution now before the House was one that might be readily justified on broader grounds than the interest of any Party. When they considered that the running of surplus candidates in a constituency meant the throwing away of a large number of votes, and that the franchise was a valuable possession, he thought hon. Members would admit that it was not a thing to be lightly squandered. As lists of candidates lengthened a winnowing process became necessary, and that would be the function of the first ballot. On that occasion an elector might vote for a person whom he considered to be an ideal candidate *i.e.* if one were nominated; but on the occasion of the second ballot it would be open to this elector, if he could not get an ideal candidate to vote for, to vote for a candidate who approached most nearly to his standard of the ideal. Neither did he think that the introduction of the second ballot would have the effect of multiplying candidates. He could not quite agree with his hon. Friend in the view he had taken of the effect of the payment of Members and of Returning Officers' charges. It was reasonable to suppose that if it did not cost a man anything in a constituency to be nominated for Parliament, the chances were that there would be a good many nominations handed in; and, therefore, to cheapen the cost of election, and to sanction the payment of Members would, in all probability, enormously multiply the number of candidates at elections. And, the introduction of the principle of the second ballot would enable the constituency to deal with that surplusage of candidates. Another objection to the multiplication of candidates was that when the Member was elected, coming from a constituency where there was a large number of candidates, it was clear that he must have received the support of but a small fraction of the constituency.

He thought, therefore, that the second ballot would supply a kind of automatic machine to rectify the errors of the first ballot. The second ballot would also do something to prevent a needless multiplication of Parties in Parliament. The number of Parties in Continental assemblies was in spite of the second ballot, and not because of it. He rather thought that the cause might be traced to the wide electorate on the Continent, and in all probability the sub-division of political parties there would be much more numerous than now if the second ballot were not in operation. In this country they wished to avoid the needless multiplication of political Parties, because, the more political Parties were multiplied and created the necessity for coalitions, the more they gave scope for the forces of intrigue to play, culminating in the eventual instability of Government. On all hands this result was considered to be undesirable, for the consequence was, that, with the existence of many political Parties, Governments were found to have very short lives, and political crises were of frequent recurrence. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would be disposed to ask, "why should we import our politics from continental nations?" He did not think, however, that was the attitude assumed by hon. Members on the Resolution which had been moved the previous week on "Home Rule all round." Then the example of foreign nations was elevated on a high pedestal indeed, and it was held up for their admiration and imitation. He thought that the drawbacks resulting from the adoption of this Resolution were trifling and temporary compared with the gains which would result. The second ballot would lead to a truer representation of the people in Parliament, a result permanent and abiding in its character and likely to add to the strength of our representative institutions.

Mr. JOHN ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) condemned the proposal as a mischievous one. Anyone who was acquainted with the political history of this country, and cared to compare it with the political history, past and present, of foreign countries, must be aware that the great force and strength of our Parliamentary institutions lay in the fact that there were only two Parties in the House and in the country; and it was because the country was so divided that Parliamentary Government was possible at all here. Those who took an interest in foreign politics, as he did, knew that at the present time in Hungary, Italy, and France, Parliamentary Government was in a condition which filled its admirers with a great deal of apprehension, and the danger was due to the large number of divisions and to the number of faddists of all kinds who claimed recognition and representation. The result was, that no Government could endure either in France or in Italy. It was clear to anyone that one of the first effects of the second ballot would be to cause candidates to enter upon a contested election with a feeling that the whole affair was a sham, without any spirit, energy, or feeling of real fight now prevalent. The second ballot would induce every person possessed of a hobby or a fad to put forward his own particular candidate, with the intention to gauge the strength of support obtainable from the preliminary contest. This would destroy any chance or hope of a real fight taking place. At present, all those persons who had fads or fancies must say to which Party they incline, and they must throw in their lot with that Party. His hon. Friend said that they could not persuade the Independent Labour Party to throw in their lot with the Liberal Party; and, having been beaten, the Members of the Liberal Party wished this Resolution to be passed. But if his hon. Friends were fairly beaten, they were beaten because the Independent Labour Party could not be persuaded thai the Liberals were better friends to them than the Tories. If the proposal were carried out the Collectivists, Fabians, New Unionists, Independents, or whatever they called themselves, would not only be able to test their strength, but would be able to do it without putting their hands in their pockets, which after all, was a great check on bogus candidates. Perhaps they would have as many as twenty candidates, and, after they had had a sham election, they would come to the real election, to which at least a fortnight must be devoted, as in France and Belgium. What would be the result?—the introduction of the very manœuvring and intriguing which the hon. Member himself had deprecated.

What would happen when they had half-a-dozen candidates with 300, 400, or 500 voters behind them, all representing different fads and different sections of the community. It would lead to a course of agitation, manœuvring and intrigue which would destroy entirely the simplicity of elections. He hoped this elaborate system would never prevail in this country. All these elaborate systems were deemed a failure, and were very inferior to our old-fashioned simple method. He had seen, three or four months ago, an election in Belgium, and one man had to vote for sixteen members of the Lower House and nine members of the Senate, and he might have one, two, or three votes, and it took him an hour-and-a-half to make up his ballot paper, and then he was puzzled as to what he had done. He hoped this attempt to pat the faddists on the back would not succeed, and that there would be no sham elections at all, but that each party would do its best to secure as their representatives those who were content to waive some of their fads.

*Mr. A. CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said he belonged to that class of Members who had been anathematized by the hon. Member below him. He did not succeed in polling the majority of those who went to the poll, but he supposed some of the statements which had been made must be treated, as many other statements made on Friday evenings, as an excellent jest. It had been admitted that the purpose of the Motion was to thwart the Labour Party, the hon. Member who seconded it said the Motion was inevitable, because the Labour Party had become strong in this country.

*Mr. HOLLAND submitted that he said simply that the Independent Labour Party were strongly in favour of the principle of the Second Ballot themselves. The hon. Member for West Ham had introduced a Resolution precisely on the lines of his Second Ballot Bill last Session.

*Mr. A. CROSS said, he would not say anything against the authority of the hon. Member for West Ham. His hon. Friend had said that the question had been before the House some time ago, he believed in 1882. But, when the proposal on that occasion was carried, it was by the magnificent majority of two in a small House, and that could hardly be called a very pronounced expression of opinion; besides the main proposal then was concerning the payment of the Returning Officer's expenses: a great many Radicals and Liberals took exception to the principle of an addendum in favour of the second ballot, and, although voting for the Second Reading of that Composite Bill, distinctly disclaimed having anything to do with the second part. The proposal to-night was being put forward as a Party move. He thought it was neither fair nor proper for hon. Members to use their positions for the purpose of promoting legislation in the interests of one Party, and when a motion with such an object was proposed, it was their duty to oppose it on the broad issue that they were there in the interests of the whole country. He entirely concurred in the argument that the House should be the mirror of the country, but majorities were not a perfect guide—it might well happen that they could have a few thousand voters distributed in such a way that they could command a majority of the House, whilst by no means representing a majority of the country. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs had now taken up the rights of majorities, but he imagined in the next Parliament he would very likely advocate the rights of minorities instead. The vote given at the second ballot would not be a real expression of the convictions of the voters, but log-rolling. The broad ground on which Parliamentary government in this country rested was government by Party, which this proposal would stultify. He objected to the prolonged turmoil and distraction of the constituencies which such excitement as that proposed would involve. Hon. Members knew what a serious distraction on the country a General Election was—how it prevented the flow of commerce, and checked trade. It was proposed now to add seriously to the inconvenience that already resulted from the disturbance of trade during a General Election. The expense of Elections would be greatly increased, as would also the strain of personal exertion thrown upon candidates. Then the expense of Elections would be almost doubled. It appeared from the

Returns which showed the effect of the proposed system in Germany that, at the last election there, nearly one-half, had to be repeated in consequence of the second ballot. In France a second ballot took place in one out of every four constituencies. The system would greatly increase the labour and expense which would fall on candidates in a large proportion of contests. Even if the Returning Officers' expenses were paid, the expenses of candidates would still be large. Such expense would have the effect of more or less diminishing the class from which candidates at Parliamentary Elections are drawn and limiting the choice of the electorate. He regretted that the Liberal Party should be so continually tinkering with the question of reform. After many years of struggle we had obtained a broad electorate and a very adequate distribution of power in the hands of the people. It was said that only 12 out of the 670 Members of the House of Commons would be affected by the proposed change. He deplored that the question of the machinery of election should be eternally before the country and the House, and thought the time and energy devoted to the advocacy of proposals dealing with the constitution of the country might be more profitably employed in many other ways. He trusted the House would see that whatever questions might be considered when they were on the eve of a new Reform Bill it was only a waste of time to debate subjects of this sort which were only of academic interest, and affected a very small number of members.

*MR. BILLSON (Devon, Barnstaple) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down showed great ingratitude to the Mover of the Resolution, because if the Resolution were law the hon. Member would obviously and ostensibly represent the majority of the electors of the Camlachie Division instead of, as appeared from the figures, the minority. As to what the hon. Gentleman had said about the desirability of postponing these matters until some new Reform Bill was brought in, was the hon. Gentleman not aware that a new Reform Bill must always be worked up to by what he called academic discussions of various theories? It would be utterly impossible for the House of Commons to set itself deliberately to a really comprehensive measure of registration and electoral reform until there had been previously decided by the House one by one the various controversial points that entered into the consideration of the problem. His hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Addison) spoke of the natural division of the electors of the country into two historical parties. But there had been a great change in that respect. In old days no one thought of having a second ballot, because either the expense of a contest was so enormous that only rich men could enter upon it, or, as in the case of some historical elections, the contest was less between political parties than between two rival families in the constituency. All that was changed since there had been admitted to the electorate a larger number of people, and new conditions had come into operation to meet their views. It was also said by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Addison) that, if the system of second ballot were in operation, the first ballot would not be carried out with any spirit. Why? It would be of the utmost importance to every one interested, that his candidate should, if possible, be at the head of the poll in the first ballot, because it would be only the two candidates who were at the top of the poll who would take part in the second ballot. Again, the hon. and learned Gentleman said, that if there was the proposed system in force, a man would go to the poll with a light heart, because he would have nothing to lose. He apprehended the Resolution referred only to the particular points at which it was aimed, and when it was brought into operation it would be associated with some method by which, whilst the expenses of the election were placed on the public fund, there would be a provision that those who only polled a small portion of votes, and therefore had no real ground for being a candidate, should pay their own expenses. Furthermore, there was the bugbear that frequency of election would produce a great deal of unnecessary turmoil. In old days elections lasted a considerable time—sometimes two or three weeks. Now, however, we had done away with public nomination, and so arranged matters that elections were considered in the light of an ordinary and every-day occurrence. Although what was suggested would be a new departure it was impossible not to believe that the electorate would soon become educated up to it, and would enter into the spirit of that which was intended, and would go into the succeeding ballot as a matter of course, without any particular fuss and without probably any great expense. Looking to all these considerations, remembering that we were not quite so rigidly divided into the two historical parties we once were, and knowing how important it was that constituencies should have the opportunity of returning men in whom the majorities believed, he heartily supported the Motion.

*MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Wilts, Devizes) said, there was one advantage in an academic discussion of a subject of this sort. and that was that a member like himself who might feel some objection to a particular plan for arriving at a second ballot, found himself free to vote in general approval of the principle of a second ballot. The arguments which had been advanced to night against the principle of second ballot seemed to him to be so very trivial as merely to touch the fringe of the question: certainly he had not heard any reason given why a Member of the House should not approve of the principle. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite said that in Belgium a voter found himself called upon to vote for 16 or 18 persons. That was no novel experience in England, because in the recent Vestry elections in London some voters had had to grapple with no less than 300 names. It had been argued that people would go into the first fight feeling there was really no fight at all, and that the proceedings would have to be repeated another day. He thought the possibility of a second ballot would have a most stimulating effect upon any person who offered his services. It had been said that this Resolution had been put forward on behalf of the Party. He was sure that hon. Members who went into the Lobby in support of it would do so, not from any motive of Party advantage, although he saw no harm in that, but because they felt that anyone who sat in that House should have a clear majority of the votes of the electors whom he represented. The only serious argument put forward against the Resolution was that of the increase in expense. No doubt that might result, but did it necessarily follow as a consequence that an increase in the number of candidates at an election increased the expense? He doubted that very much. Of course, if there was a second ballot, there must be a certain amount of extra expense, but it would be small in comparison with the amount that was already spent. But even if the expenses were doubled or trebled, he ventured to think that, looking at the average length of Parliaments now, a few thousands or hundreds of thousands more might well be spent in order that the Members of that House should truly represent the wishes of the electors of the country, and that the majority of the Members who really directed the Government for so long a period as four or five years should, at all events, be representative of the wishes of the people, and if they had to pay a little increased charge to arrive at that result, he, for one, should not be inclined to demur to it.

MR. T. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) said, that the proposal of his hon. Friend, which he very cordially supported, was a very different proposal to that of 1882. This proposal was that the candidate elected should receive, not a majority of the voters on the register, but an absolute majority of the votes recorded. That was a very different thing to the proposal of 1882. A good deal had happened since 1882. If they looked at the Debate in 1882 they would see how different the aspect of Parliamentary affairs of that day was. One hon. Member, who was not now a Member of the House, stated in that Debate that as a rule it was not desirable that a working man should represent a large body of his fellow-countrymen; and another Member of that Parliament. who was then a Member of the House, contended that men who aspired to a seat in the House of Commons should have independent means and plenty of leisure, and that he was utterly unable to see how a skilled artisan or *bonâ-fide* workman could come down to the House and sit up all night. In the present Parliament there was a very large number of skilled artisans, and they confuted by their presence the statement made by that hon. Member. What were the objections of Mr. Fawcett to the proposal in 1882? He said he could not support it, because it was difficult of application to double-member constituencies, and because it would lead to a drifting into single-member constituencies. Since that time they had drifted almost entirely into single-member constituencies, and he rather thought that if they had the advantage of Mr. Fawcett's presence that day he would be found to support the Resolution, because the main ground of his objection had been removed by the changes which had taken place in the constitution of the country. Mr. Fawcett went on to say that he thought there should be three or four-member constituencies in order that minorities might be represented in the House. Then, again, Mr. Fawcett would have discovered that what had taken place since 1882 had shown that no better method of securing the representation of minorities could be found than that of single-member constituencies. The present fair distribution of representation between the two Parties was evidence that there was no minority in the country that had not the power of asserting itself at the time of an election, and of securing representation. When the hon. and learned Member for Ashton told the House that the first election would be a sham, he could not have taken all the circumstances into account. Instead of the election being a sham it would be much more real and earnest than the second election. If it was true that a second appeal would be disliked by a candidate, that it would involve additional expenditure and cause additional turmoil, it might be expected that a candidate would make most strenuous efforts to secure an absolute majority at the first election in order to avoid further trouble. They had been told that the Liberal Party was constituted of groups. The Party opposite was not absolutely homogeneous either. It was only reasonable that the test of a second ballot should be offered to the various groups in a constituency in order that they might arrive at a satisfactory decision as to which of those groups was dominant. He should himself be quite prepared to abide by the decision of the ballot box if any one group in his constituency, whether he was in sympathy with or differed from it, could prove by that means that it could command a majority of those who took a sufficient interest in the affairs of the constituency to record their votes. Therefore, on the ground that different groups ought to be able to determine satisfactorily which of their candidates commanded a majority, it was desirable that they should be given the opportunity of a second ballot to be used in cases of need. Then there would be very little doubt that groups of electors who voted for a first or second candidate as against a third, but who found that their candidates were rejected by a majority of the constituency, would unite at the second ballot in support of one of the unsuccessful candidates. The real opinion of the constituency would then be expressed. He knew of course, that a prolonged contested election was not a very agreeable process, but "there was no making of omelettes without breaking of eggs." The best way to make the entrance to Parliament smoother than it had been in the past was by letting the constituencies see that the wish of their representatives was that they should exercise to the fullest extent their right of choice among candidates. The House had decided that there should be payment of Members, and it followed as an absolute consequence of that decision that the opportunity of returning candidates whom the real majority approved ought to be assured to constituencies.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) did not think that this Resolution, if passed, would be likely to affect materially the constitution of Parliament. He objected to the proposed change because it was wholly unnecessary for all practical purposes, because it would inflict a great deal of unnecessary trouble upon candidates, and because it would cause a great deal of unnecessary commotion in constituencies. The constituencies certainly did not want prolonged election contests, and it was not desirable that the country should be kept too long in a convulsed state. Instead of an election lasting two or three weeks as at present, it would, under this system, last four or five weeks. Then a large number of candidates would often be proposed, for the system would encourage a multiplicity of candidates, real and unreal. The faddists would avail themselves of the opportunity to trot out their particular fads and to embody them in candidatures. After a first election there would be all sorts of negociations at headquarters, and bargains and all kinds of manœuvres and political arrangements in a constituency with the object of ousting the man who had obtained the largest number of votes, and of putting the second or third man in his place. Then the expense would be greatly increased. For instance, the returning officer's charges would be doubled. He could not think that that would conduce to the advantage of constituences, to the advantage of politics, or to the efficient represesentation of constituencies in Parliament. Candidates found it quite troublesome and costly enough to undergo one election. Prolonged electoral contests would deter a great many men from coming forward who would be most desirable candidates for Parliament. He had a good deal of experience of contested elections, for he had engaged in Municipal elections, School Board elections and Parliamentary elections. What good was to be obtained? It was said that sometimes under the present system a man got in who represented a minority; but if so, he represented a majority of the people voting who knew their own minds at the time of the election. Was it to be a majority of the whole constituency or only of those who voted? He could understand a proposal that a man should not sit in Parliament unless he represented a majority of the voters, but he could not understand the logical consistency of this proposition, which dealt only with those voting in a particular election. The truth was, their present system worked very well. It practically carried out the principle of representative government. It was consistent with their Parliamentary history and Party Government, and there was no necessity whatever for a change. The only effect of the introduction of the plan suggested would be that they would prolong elections and cause increased trouble and expense, and under these circumstances he hoped that the House would pause before passing the crude and unnecessary Resolution under discussion. The state of the House showed the feeling with regard to it. As far as he could see the scheme was impracticable and unnecessary.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, as the House did not appear to desire to debate the question at any great length, he might say that the Government would leave the matter to the determination of the House; and for his part, in supporting this Motion, he did so in his individual capacity. The subject, which had been brought forward in an able speech, possessed great interest of late in the constituencies, but it had not hitherto been much discussed in the House of Commons. In 1882 it formed a portion of a measure proposed by Mr. Ashton Dilke, but it did not form the main subject of Debate. The main subject was the payment of Returning Officers out of the rates, but there was a clause in the Bill proposing a second ballot, and the House came to a decision in favour of the second ballot. Mr. Fawcett supported the Bill, but stated his strong objection to the second ballot proposal, but it appeared that the reason which influenced him was connected with redistribution. He rather gathered from the general drift of Mr. Fawcett's speech that, if the country decided in favour of single-member constituencies, he would not have objected to the second ballot. Since that time the House had decided the point, and in 1884 it adopted the single-Member constituencies. Then arose the danger of a Member being returned, not by the majority, but by the minority of the electors—of those, that was, actually voting. Almost every other country in Europe had adopted the system of a second ballot. The system of single Members had been adopted, and apparently on that account the principle of a second ballot had been hit upon. It was so in Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Hungary, and Belgium, and it might be almost said that it was universal. There was a very interesting Report upon the second ballot in Germany presented some two years ago, and in that Report it was explained that the system adopted in Germany was very much the system adopted in every country in Europe. It was stated in that Report that if one of the candidates obtained an absolute majority he was declared elected. If there was not an absolute majority there was a call for a second ballot. The Report went on to say that the system of a second ballot was specially important in view of the number of parties into which the Reichstag is divided, and the slight difference which constitutes the distinction between certain parties. In the last Reichstag there were eight acknowledged parties, besides the Alsatians and 17 Members belonging to no party. In the Reichstag which has just been elected, there are 13 acknowledged parties and about six independent members. There are 397 members in the Reichstag. In the last election 217 were elected in the first ballot by an absolute majority; the remaining 180 had to undergo a second ballot. They had nothing like the number of groups and sections in that House that found a place in the German Reichstag, but they must recollect that, while the House was divided into these main parties, each party had an annexe, or offshoot, or some independent group attached to it. There was always then the possibility that, when an election took place in a single-member constituency where there were so many groups, a minority of voters might return the Member. This was not a matter which affected the Liberal Party only. It might affect both parties in the State. He was rather surprised to hear the hon. Member for Glasgow state as a reason for not adopting the Motion that it was likely to break up the two great Constitutional Parties, and that it would probably result in the destruction of the great Liberal Party. If he was rightly informed, the hon. Member himself belonged to a group which had separated itself from the Great Liberal Party, and had done its best to break up and destroy that great Party.

*MR. A. CROSS said, he should regard it as a great misfortune to this country if the great Liberal Party were broken up.

*MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he was very glad to hear the hon. Member say that, but he did not think it affected what he had already said as to the hon. Member's connection with a group which had imperilled the existence of a great

Constitutional Party. But, as he had said, this was not a matter which affected one Party more than another. The Party opposite had an independent group attached to it, and they had seen quite recently in what had taken place in the constituency of Leamington the difficulties in which it found itself. If the second ballot were adopted the matter would be simplified. The Tory Party would present their candidate and the Dissentient Liberals would present theirs, and they would both be nominated. The first election would take place, and this would show whether it would be the Tory or the Dissentient Liberal candidate who would remain in for the second ballot. He would commend that to hon. Gentlemen opposite, for he thought they would then find their difficulties very much less than they were now in the matter of the selection of candidates. The advantages of the second ballot were these, that in a constituency where there were sharp divisions of opinion on subordinate questions in a party, it prevented the minority obtaining a victory in consequence of divisions in the camp of the majority; it protected the majority of a constituency against the mistakes of a small committee of selection, and secured that they should be duly represented, and it also offered the best and readiest measure of the real importance of opinions as factors of current politics. It would, no doubt, increase somewhat the expense of elections, but possibly some small addition might be made to the allowances of a candidate in respect of expenditure in the event of a second ballot becoming necessary. But the main expense would be undoubtedly the Returning Officers' charges, and one could hardly expect that the second ballot would be adopted unless they had also adopted the principle of the payment of Returning Officers' expenses out of public funds, so that that portion of the additional expenditure would not in future fall on the candidates. It had also been suggested as an objection that it would increase the trouble of elections. That, of course, would depend very much upon the number of second ballots which might take place, and, if they had to look forward to there being as many groups in this country as there were at the present time in Germany, that, perhaps, might be a serious matter. But he did not think they need look forward to anything of the kind. He had no doubt himself that the great Constitutional Parties in this country would remain as they were now, and he did not look forward to the further multiplication of groups and sections and independent members. Undoubtedly there was a considerable danger resulting from the growth of groups and sections, and there was the danger that at the elections in the immediate future they might have the misfortune of members being returned by a minority of those voting. It was for the purpose of preventing a result of that kind that this scheme of the second ballot had been devised and had been adopted in almost every country in Europe. On the whole, he thought the advantages of the scheme considerably outweighed the disadvantages, and he was therefore prepared to give his support to the hon. Member in the Motion he had brought before the House.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) thought the discussion could hardly be considered in a very serious light. They were told by the hon. Member for Salford that great interest was taken in this question both inside and outside the House, but the state of the Benches in the House, and the anticipations in the public journals, certainly did not point to any deep interest being taken in this grave constitutional question. He preferred rather to look upon it as one of those academical exercises, one of those debating society opportunities which the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had afforded the opportunity of taking part in on successive Fridays. The hon. Member had been extremely fortunate in his experience of the ballot, and he supposed that on the principle that one good turn deserved another, the hon. Member wanted to do something for the ballot seeing what the ballot had done for him. What was the object sought to be attained by the Motion? He understood it to be that the representative of a majority in a constituency was to be returned to this House, and that the minority of the constituency was not to have the power of sending its representative to this House. Now, in his opinion, this Motion, if carried, would have the precisely opposite effect. If, by a second ballot, they gave an opportunity for two sections or two parties to unite and to defeat the man returned at the first ballot, the Member so returned by the combination of the two parties was not a representative of the majority at all; he was merely the representative of the coalition of two minorities. Take the case of Middlesbrough at the last election. At Middlesbrough a Labour Representative was returned at the head of the poll with 4,600 votes. Next to him was a Home Ruler with 4,000 votes; and the lowest was a Liberal Unionist who polled 3,000 odd votes. It seemed fair and just to say that in that constituency the Labour Party had a majority. He maintained that with a second ballot it would be perfectly possible for the Home Ruler and the Unionist to combine, and, by combining, force the defeat of the Labour Member. ["No!"] Perfectly possible. Would that Member be the representative of the majority? He denied it. He would not be the representative of the majority, but he would be the Member of a coalition arrived at under all sorts of arrangements and agreements of two minorities. When returned, which Party would he represent? He would come as an anti-Labour man, returned by a combination of two Parties for the purpose of defeating another Party; but he could not be said to represent any particular principles, or any particular Party, or any majority in the constituency. The interval between the first and second elections would be an opportunity for all sorts of intrigue, for log-rolling, and for making those arrangements which were as derogatory to the Member who accepted them as to the parties who endeavoured to bring them about. It would be a very dangerous thing to encourage this system, which already prevailed to a limited extent in our elections. He believed that the system of second ballots would give an enormous incentive to these arrangements, and to what had been called "squaring," which would not conduce to the honesty and straightforwardness of the vote hon. Members gave in the House. He admitted that splits in a homogeneous party sometimes occurred, but he did not think that these occasional splits were a reason for altering the whole of our electoral system. If the internal arrangements of any party were so bad that they could not agree as to who were to represent the principles for which they fought these elections, then that party fully deserved to lose the seat. As far as he could see there was only one case at the last election—that of Perth City—which could properly be quoted as an example. There the Conservative Member polled 1,300 votes; the highest Liberal 1,100; and an Independent Liberal 900. It was obvious that if the Liberal Party could have agreed on their representative they might have carried the seat. But that was the only case. Of course he was not now reckoning the Labour Party as a portion of the Liberal Party. They themselves had always maintained an independent attitude, and many attempts had been made by prominent leaders of the Liberal Party to induce the Labour Party to abandon that independence. He agreed that one of the objections to this scheme was the enormous number of candidates which it would produce. The opportunity which it would offer for men to air their particular fads and to indulge their vanity by posing as

Parliamentary candidates, though they had no chance of being returned, would be largely made use of; and that would be very detrimental to the general position of the House of Commons and to the state of Parties. He did not desire to see the two great Parties split into a number of sections. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there were already six Parties in the House. He did not agree with that. On the great questions which divided hon. Members there were only two Parties; and it would be an evil day when we, like our Continental neighbours, found the Legislature divided into a number of sections, who were very often quarrelling violently among themselves, and whose differences it was very difficult, if not impossible, to diagnose. At the first ballot the struggle would be not between the two great Parties, but between the two leading sections into which the Parties were split up, each of which would try to head the poll. The real power would then lie in the hands of the minority. It would be very bad for us if we fell away from our present practice, and he should prefer to see the election taken upon the great constitutional questions which divide us, instead of having our energies expended on an endeavour to get the particular representative of a section of a Party into the first place. Then it was doubtful whether, in a second ballot, the defeated Section would vote at all. Supposing there was a serious split in a Party, it was quite likely that the defeated section in the first election would show their resentment against their erstwhile friends by abstaining from voting in the second election; so that the second election would leave matters precisely where they had been left by the first election a few days previously. The Report on the operations of the second ballot in Germany instanced the case of an election in Berlin, in which there had been seven candidates. In the first election the Radical got 7,000 votes, the Socialist 4,000, the Conservative 2,000. In the second ballot it was true the Radical remained at the head of the poll by an increased majority, but the Socialist also considerably increased his number of votes. The Socialist must have got this additional support from voters who voted against him on the first election, because they did not agree with him, and as it was not possible that they changed their opinions in a few days, he thought the only result of the second ballot was the introduction of a very unhealthy state of politics. Then, if this system was good for Parliamentary elections, it would have to be applied to all elections. But the general public opinion was that there were already too many elections in the country. The Party opposite had been in favour of triennial Parliaments. Evidently they had changed their minds on that question, for this was the fourth Session of the present Parliament, and what had become of the Triennial Bill? They must have come to the conclusion that frequent elections were not so desirable as they had previously thought. Then there was the increased expense supposing a second ballot was enforced. One hon. Member had said that would be a very trifling matter, but was that so? A Member would have to retain his committee-rooms, to continue his chief agents and his sub-agents; he would have to issue polling-cards again to all the constituents informing them of the date of the second poll; and, very likely, he would have to issue a further address, especially if he entered into intriguing arrangements with other parties, or had changed his views with the object of securing his election. The question of expense was a very serious consideration. Again, he said, it was not desirable to duplicate and reduplicate these elections all over the country, and to prolong them over a considerable period of time. The tendency, he thought, was, on the contrary, to have all the elections on one day. What had become of that? Had it been lost sight of? It was true this system of a second ballot prevailed very largely abroad; but it must be remembered that elections abroad, for the most part, took place on the Sunday, and were looked upon as part of the holiday. They took their pleasures more sadly in this country, though he did not know that an election was a pleasure at any time either for the electors or for the elected, and it certainly was no pleasure to the non-elected. But if they were going to repeat this dose it would be nauseous, and he doubted very much whether they should not find great difficulty in getting the electors to come to the poll at all. They had experience of the difficulty there was in polling the full strength of the electorate at the present time. Look at the recent elections in London. How small a percentage of the mass of electors registered recorded their votes on that occasion. He had thought it his duty to place these reasons before the House to induce them to pause before committing themselves to so great a change in the system which had prevailed with such satisfactory results in this country for so long. The burden of proof in this matter rested with those who desired to produce a change, and he maintained that the hon. Member and those who supported him had not shown that the present system had in any way broken down. At the last General Election, out of 646 elections held all over the country, there were absolutely only six in which the principle of a second ballot would have had any effect at all. [MR. DALZIEL: "There were 12."] He had gone into the question very carefully, and he could only discover six. Out of these six there were some in which a second ballot could have had no effect whatever. Take the case of St. Albans, for instance, where the Conservative Party was split. The Conservative Member who was returned, they might assume, would have polled a considerable section of those who supported the Conservative Member who was defeated, and if he had polled any reasonable percentage at all he would have defeated the Liberal. In that case, therefore, a second ballot would have had no influence even if it had come into operation. When there were so few cases in which it would be necessary to resort to this plan, they might fairly say, *De minimis non curat lex;* the grievance was so small that it was hardly worth consideration. He feared that, as in foreign countries, so in this country, this process would result, to use a geological term, in the lamination of parties—the splitting of them up into a number of small sections; and that would be a great evil for this country. He much preferred that we should go on under the old Party system. The broad floor of the House which separated the benches of the two sides was an emblem of the broad line which divided one Party from another. He believed that this demarcation was unique among the Chambers of Europe; others were divided by many smaller lines like the gangways between the rows of benches on each side of the House. He preferred to see a broad line of distinction; and he endorsed the following words of Mr. Disraeli in a celebrated speech which he delivered at Manchester:—

> "Gentlemen, I am a Party man. I believe that without Party Parliamentary Government is impossible. I look upon Parliamentary Government as the noblest government in the world, and certainly the one most suited to England."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he did not see that in a second ballot there was anything con- to Party or to Parliamentary Government, in Lord Beaconsfield's praise of which he cordially concurred. There was, however, a broad aspect of the question which had not been dealt with by the representatives of a Party whose members often fulminated against the caucus system. This plan would deal a heavy blow against the worst features of the caucus system. Of course, we must have organisation by Party, without which it would be impossible to have a fair and square fight. But when a small and by no means representative caucus had in its hands the duty of selecting a candidate, then there was evil in the caucus system which could be got rid of only by a second ballot. There was caucus in his constituency in 1885, and, if it had been allowed to have its own way in the selection of a candidate without any protest, the newly-enfranchised electors would not have had an opportunity of expressing their will. It was because he protested against this, fought against the nominee of the caucus, and ran the risk of being branded as a rebel, that the newly-enfranchised electors had the chance of making their voices heard against the domination of the old clique. He based his support of this proposal upon the broad general principle that it was most desirable a constituency should have an opportunity given to it of electing whatever candidate might be able to obtain the greatest amount of support. The most weighty objection urged by the last speaker appeared to be that upon examination he could find only six cases in the last general election in which there would have been any need of the second ballot. The arguments of the hon. Member opposite destroyed each other. At one time he said the second ballot would find so little place in our institutions that it would do exceedingly little harm, and at another time he spoke of it as a monstrous evil which could not be tolerated. The hon. Member had appealed to the House on the question of cost, but he had also pointed to the fact that in all probability election expenses would soon be placed on the rates or on the shoulders of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His own view was that the business of the country should be carried on in the way most conducive to all the interests concerned, and if it was necessary to impose greater burdens on the taxpayers in order to get a more adequate representation of the people in the House, he was sure they would raise no complaint. The hon. Gentleman had not shown that the numerous sections into which Continental Parliaments were divided was the result of the second ballot. He suggested that the interval between the first and second ballot would be devoted to all sorts of log-rolling and intrigue. Well, it would not be the first time they had heard of log-rolling and intrigue in connection with elections. If they were to believe all they read there was not a little intrigue going on in connection with the approaching election at Warwick and Leamington. They heard about bartering, and about the particular terms upon which two parties would divide certain seats among themselves. He did not think there could be anything more derogatory to the high tone of politics in this country under a second ballot than the difficulties with which they were familiar in the relations between the Liberal Unionist party and their tory allies. It did not lie with either of these parties to make suggestions of log-rolling or political intriguing in connection with a proposal for the second ballot. A second ballot in his opinion would be a very material improvement of our electoral system. It would be a further step towards democratic progress, by enabling all parties and sections in the State to have the fullest opportunity of obtaining their share of representation in the House of Commons.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he must confess that he felt not more than a languid interest in this discussion, and if he might judge from the aspect of the House during the course of the evening he might say that those feelings were not confined to himself. The front Opposition Bench was nearly empty, and, as for the Treasury Bench, they might estimate the interest of the Government in this subject from the fact that the one Cabinet Minister who was present and had spoken had told the House that the Government had no opinion upon the matter. The Mover of this Resolution had been extremely fortunate in finding subjects for Friday nights, but he was not sure that on some broiling afternoon later on he might desire to take the sense of the House on the execution of Charles I. He did not think the present subject of great practical importance, but it did not follow that because there were only six cases at the last election to which this principle would have applied, that therefore they would not have more than six at the next general election. In his view there would be a multiplication of such cases if this resolution were acted upon. They knew that Mr. Disraeli had said that we adored party Government simply because we were used to it, and in the illustration quoted by the hon. Member for Middlesbrough they saw the advantage of not having a second ballot. Since the operation of the present system, it did allow a little power of breaking down party organisation, and it seemed that it did bring out elements of representation of opinion which otherwise would not find representation. He did not agree about changing the machinery, but if a change were made it would not dissipate present party organisation. The second ballot did not tend to multiply parties, but to reduce everything to two parties. It might be asked, how, then, had they seen a multiplication of parties in France and Germany? In the latter country the multiplication of parties arose from the variation of local interests. In England they had had three great parties for a long time, because of the intense diverse of Irish interests. In a country like Hanover, and in working-class centres in other parts of Germany, they got in the representative Assembly a diversity of parties, because in each there was a party which had not a controlling voice through the whole of the Empire. The second ballot did not create, but rather restrained, these diversities of parties, which arose from want of homogeneity. They had passed rather an instructive evening. They had been learning; and his object in rising was to show how hon. Members might get what they wanted in another way. It had been said with truth that the second ballot meant the prolongation for a week of agony, and all the bitter feelings involved in having a second election a week after the first. The object of the second ballot could be attained in one and the same election without any postponement, and without all the expense and anxiety entailed by such postponement. It was a manifestation of the interest which he felt in the matter that he volunteered a suggestion. How was it to be done? They were dealing with a single-member system, and three or four candidates might be running for one seat. Under the present system the representative of a minority might get elected. Take the case, however, where A received 900 first votes, B 600 votes, and C 500 votes; no one had a majority. Then take the 500 votes and see who was the second favourite of the 500 voters who voted for C. Let the voters do their second balloting straight away; let them take the 500 votes and distribute them among A and B. By this means they obtained at one and the same moment the elimination of what hon. Gentlemen professed to desire—namely, the opinion of the majority of the electors—without trouble, without expense, and without exasperation of feeling. He doubted whether it was worth while, but he would make this suggestion as a present to the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy. The only doubt suggested was whether the electors could understand the system. He was amazed to hear his ultra-democratic Friends express distrust of the capacity of the elector to master the principle of selecting the man whom he considered to be second best for the purposes of representation.

The House divided:—Noes 132; Ayes 72.—(Division List No. 42.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved,—That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that provision should be made for a Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections in all cases where no Candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes recorded.

Supply,—Committee upon Monday next.

## RULE OF THE ROAD AT SEA.

Motion made,—To nominate the Select Committee on the Rule of the Road at Sea: That Mr. Attorney General, Sir George Baden-Powell, Mr. Blake, the Marquess of Carmarthen, Mr. Cayzer, Sir Francis Evans, Admiral Field, Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Sir James Kitson, Mr. Moorsom, Mr. Joseph Richardson, Mr. Roby, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir Richard Webster, and Mr. Stephen Williamson be Members of the Committee: That the Committee have the power to send for Persons Papers, and Records: That Five be the Quorum.—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)*

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) said, that when the Irish Members the other night wanted a concession from the Government in respect to the Irish Lights Board they were met by the hostility and opposition of the President of the Board of Trade. They had felt that deeply, and he intended, as far as he could to offer objection and opposition to any action, taken by the President of the Board of Trade, in respect to English matters until the right hon. Gentleman showed some willingness to make concessions in regard to Irish matters. They had reason to expect much better treatment from the right hon. Gentleman.

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE,** (Mr. Bryce Aberdeen, S.) said, that this motion was not an English matter, but one affecting the United Kingdom as a whole. In the next place, it was not in consequence of any action of the Government. The Motion was brought forward by the hon. Member for West Perthshire at the request of a number of shipping organisations, and the Government were not concerned with it at all. They had simply made a concession to the demands of certain interests in the House and the country. In the third place, as to the matter to which the hon. Member referred, his attitude on that occasion was far from being hostile to the Irish Members. He had endeavoured to do the best he could for them by offering a Select Committee to investigate the question. That was the furthest he could go in the matter, and he was surprised that the hon. Member should regard as hostile that action, which was entirely friendly, and which he should have thought would have been welcomed by the Irish Members.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** said, that by the time they were through with this business between the Irish Members and the Board of Trade the right hon. Gentleman would find that he would have been better advised not to take the distinctly unfriendly and hostile attitude which he had adopted on Thursday week last. He should object to the Motion.

Motion accordingly postponed.

House adjourned at a Quarter
after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Monday, 8th April 1895.*

## LORD DECIES (CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND).

Ordered and directed—

That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Lord Decies to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him, the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such Report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

And it is hereby also ordered—

That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

List of school districts in England and Wales, with the Standards fixed by the By-laws of each district, revised to 1st March, 1895:

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

The following Bills were presented by Lord Carrington (for Lord Playfair), read 1$^{a}$, and ordered to be printed:—

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (WESTON-SUPER-MARE) BILL [H.L.].—(NO. 68.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for Weston-super-Mare to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (BRISTOL) BILL [H.L.].—(NO. 69.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for Bristol to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (LEEDS) BILL [H.L.].—(NO. 70.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for Leeds to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.

## COLONIAL APPEALS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): I wish to give notice, on behalf of the Prime Minister, that on an early day after the Easter Recess he will introduce a Bill to enable Colonial Judges to take their seats on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

## CHITRAL.

Lord ASHBOURNE asked was there any further news from Chitral?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Lord Reay): The following telegram has just been received:—

"From Viceroy, 8th April, 1895.

"Low reports, 7th, strong opposition to bridging operations at Aladand this morning. A large number of enemy crowned heights on the opposite side of river and fired on working parties. Umra Khan's brother was in command with a number of his cavalry and infantry. General Waterfield's Brigade, supported by 15th Bengal Infantry, advanced to force passage of river, No. 8 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, and Maxim of King's Own Borderers, co-operating effectively; then 11th Bengal Lancers made brilliant dash across river and attacked enemy, who had begun to bolt up valley. Eleventh pursued for miles, up to Uch, killing about 100. Fourth and 15th Bengal Infantry then forded river and occupied Chakdarra. King's Own Borderers, fording about a mile above, captured Umra Khan's fort at Thana with slight opposition. Our loss was slight—one sapper and few men and horses wounded. Camels are now crossing Malakand Pass; about 1,000 arrived Khar, 7th.

"Low reports First Brigade has shifted camp to site 2nd Brigade. Our casualties on 7th crossing Swat river were—2nd Battalion, King's Own Borderers, one man wounded; 11th Bengal Infantry, one man wounded; 4th Sikhs, two men drowned; Sappers, two men wounded. Enemy's loss was 150. Muhammed Shah, Umra Khan's brother, was in command of enemy, and escaped. Three Regiments Third Brigade on Malakand Pass. Convoy camels came through 7th April. Uch and Katgola Pass will be occupied 8th. Your telegram of 5th. Progress of wounded will be reported by telegraph as soon as known."

## TIME-MARKS ON LETTERS.

Lord ASHBOURNE, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government when it was intended to introduce the practice of indicating the hour of posting on the post-mark as in America and other countries; whether any commencement had yet been made; and when it was expected that the plan would be in full operation—said, that the question which he had placed upon the Paper was one which attracted a good deal of attention among all classes of the community, and his object was to ascertain what the present Government were doing in regard to it. He believed that up to the year 1818 or 1820 the practice of marking the hour on the post-mark prevailed in our Post Office. Why that practice was given up he did not know, and he did not suppose that there were any Members present in the House who were old enough to recollect. The practice of marking the hour of posting enabled the public to check and control and trace their letters; it enabled merchants and traders to ascertain whether business correspondence had been posted at the hour at which it should have been posted; and it enabled private individuals to ascertain whether their servants had posted letters entrusted to them at the proper hour and at the most convenient pillar, a matter as to which everyone had, at times, occasion for some little internal doubt. Some 200 Members of the House of Commons had signed a requisition in favour of this system, which had for many years been in operation with enormous advantage in the United States, and had also been adopted by Canada and Australia. As an illustration of its advantage he might mention that the day before he put this question on the Paper he received a letter from Virginia which brought the matter very vividly to his mind. From the marks upon the letter it appeared that it was posted at a certain small town in that State at 7 a.m. on March 20, that it reached the head office in that State at 11 a.m. the same day, and that it was received at New York at 12 o'clock at night. It was not till it arrived at our own metropolis that the letter failed to show any indication that could be made out by an ordinary individual as to the hour when it was received. His Friend Mr. Henniker Heaton, who had been one of the most vigorous and able critics on postal matters, and to whose influence and suggestions many of the recent reforms were distinctly owing, had drawn attention to this subject in the other House, and he was informed that during the last two or three weeks some advance had been made in reference to the reintroduction of the old English system. But, as to the progress of this reform, he would like information. He was informed that in two post offices in London the practice of hour-marking had lately been introduced to some extent. He believed that in the House of Commons—he did not know how it was in their Lordships' House—letters posted between 7 and 10 o'clock had the hour marked upon them, and he believed that some letters were marked in the same way at the General Post Office. He was also given to understand that in some large towns in England a commencement in the same direction had already been made. He desired to ask when it was expected that the practice would be in full operation over the whole of the United Kingdom. He was aware that there used to be a system in our Post Office of indicating, by means of some mysterious letters in the post-mark, the hour of posting, and that the index to those letters was stated to be in the "Postal Guide," but that the particular page in the "Postal Guide" had for some reason been removed. A gentleman who had taken a great interest in postal affairs, and who was not a sanguine man, had stated that he was afraid that, unless the Post Office authorities were more active than sometimes, the completion of this reform would take some years, and that it might not happen in the lifetime of himself and others of their Lordships. Perhaps, however, the noble Lord opposite would, in answering the question on the Paper, be able to allay some of the anxieties in regard to the matter.

The LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord Tweedmouth) said, that, in the absence of his noble Friend Lord Playfair, through indisposition, the Postmaster General had asked him to say that he had already introduced the system which the noble Lord opposite had so urgently pressed upon the House. The plan adopted was to mark in clock figures the hour at which the letter passed under the stamp. This would be found set out at page 41 of the new Postal Regulations. He could not tell the noble Lord whether the reform would take as long as he inferred before it should become general, but this he might say, that it was the intention of the Post Office Department to cause the system to become general as soon as possible. It was not, however, thought desirable to incur the very great expense of making this alteration on all the stamps in the United Kingdom at one and the same time. He hoped that the noble Lord would be satisfied with the assurance that the system which he had pressed for would be introduced as speedily as possible throughout the Kingdom.

## LAND TRANSFER BILL.

The LORD CHANCELLOR, in rising to move the Third Reading of this Bill said: I did not intend to make any observations at this stage, the Bill having already been before your Lordships more than once, but my attention has been called to some remarks recently made with regard to it which, I think, require an answer and explanation. The President of the Incorporated Law Society has recently been examined before a Committee of the other House with reference to the expediency of appointing a State trustee, and in the course of his evidence he said:—

> "The present idea is that the employment of the official trustee by the public is to be voluntary, but there is very little doubt, judging by our experience in the past, that an effort would be made to extend his employment in every possible way."

Now, this is the passage to which I specially take exception:—

> "I see the Lord Chancellor, in his evidence before the Committee, objects to the term 'attracting business,' because it looks as if the official trustee would attempt to get business. The Land Registry was established as a purely voluntary system. In that capacity it failed; and, having failed to attract business, the officials have induced the Lord Chancellor in seven out of the last nine years to bring Bills into Parliament to make the use of the registry compulsory in a district to be named, with a view, of course, to make it compulsory throughout the country."

I am, no doubt, responsible for some of those measures, and I desire to state that these statements have been made under a complete misapprehension of the facts. The Bills which I have introduced have not been brought in by me at the instance of the officials of the Land Registry. My noble predecessor is responsible for the other Bills, and I have his authority for saying that, in his case also, no opinions of the officials of the Land Registry influenced his action. I have every desire to see reform and improvement in the transfer of land, but I certainly should not, at the instance of the officials of the Land Registry, and with the view of increasing the fees there, have put myself to the trouble of introducing measures such as this, nor should I have dreamed of inviting your Lordships to pass into law a measure of this importance merely that the fees of the Land Registry might be increased. Nothing of that has operated on my mind or, I am assured, on that of my predecessor in office. We have believed—we believe now—that a system of land registration would be of great advantage to the people of this country—to the owners, purchasers, and sellers of land—and it is in that belief that we have asked your Lordships to pass this measure through your House. I have, I own, very considerable sympathy with the objections taken by solicitors and others to what is called "officialism." Speaking generally, I do not think it desirable that the State should, through its officials, compete with professional people of any description, or that they should do the work which would otherwise be done by professional men. But I limit that expression of opinion to the cases where professional men can do the work. In founding this system, we are dealing with a proposal which solicitors cannot give effect to. A system of land registration can only be established by the State, and the State, in establishing it, is not competing with professional men, but is undertaking a work in the interests of the public—a work which it is quite impossible that professional men can give effect to. I have formed a decided opinion that a measure of this kind would be advantageous, and I think I can appeal to broad experience in its favour. Almost every country, including many of our own colonies, has adopted a system either of registration of title or registration of deeds; and in some countries—Germany and Hungary, for instance—that has been done after experience of the working of similar measures in those countries. I cannot doubt that what has proved beneficial in so many parts of the world, under so many systems of government and administration, and with differing laws, would be found applicable in this country also. The system has worked well in our colonies, and I have not heard a suggestion that it would be well to revert to the system in use in those colonies before. That appears to me to be an overwhelming body of testimony in favour of a measure of this sort. It has been said that the change would give facilities for fraud. I am not of that opinion. At least, I have this to appeal to—that in the colonies which I have referred to an insurance fund has been established. The calls on this insurance fund have been altogether without importance; and that, I think, affords one good evidence for saying that that apprehension is not likely to be well founded. The opposition to this Bill, no doubt, has been strongly urged by the solicitors in this country. I do not for a moment mean to indicate or to suggest, from knowledge or experience, that they are consciously actuated by any motives of self-interest. I believe they are perfectly honest in the opposition which they have raised; but it is a striking fact that it is only, as far as I know, from them that any opposition to this Bill proceeds. I have received many letters on the subject of the Bill. I have received many encouragements to proceed with it, and many expressions of a hope that it will be passed into law; but, except from solicitors, I have not received any note of opposition or hostility to it. No doubt there have been many suggestions for its amendment, and for the making of the system more perfect. Although I do not for a moment intend to say that the solicitors in their opposition are actuated by any conscious self-interest, yet undoubtedly some of them are very fully alive to the impression that the result of passing the Bill would be very disadvantageous to them. I have received from a solicitor in the West of England a letter, in which he reproached me bitterly for having invited your Lordships to pass such a Bill. He called my attention to the fact that it was to the solicitors of this country I owed my present position, because without their having favoured me with briefs I should not have occupied it; and he thought it a very poor return for this that I should strive to work a deadly injury by such a measure. I believe that this impression is exaggerated, but, nevertheless, one finds in certain quarters those who entertain it, and it accounts for a certain amount of opposition, unconsciously dictated, no doubt, by feelings of that description. Of course I do not pretend that this measure is perfect. It is intended, in the first instance, to be tentative only. There are already two counties in England where registration of deeds is compulsory; and I think everyone is agreed that it is a system which has not proved altogether satisfactory in its working. The object of the Bill is to enable a trial to be made of the system of registration of title in lieu of registration of deeds, and it is a system justified by the experience of other countries and of our colonies. I believe that when the system comes into operation it will be found to be very beneficial. One word as to the observation that the Bill is being introduced because land registry under a voluntary system had failed to attract business. I do not think that is altogether an accurate description. There has been a very considerable amount of land registration in the land register under a voluntary system; but I think this is an instance in which it is impossible to conclude that the fact that a small amount of land has been registered has resulted from dissatisfaction with the system. The truth is that those who, I believe, would be benefited by the system—namely, the owners of land—have been largely unaware of the advantages of the measure. They purchase a piece of land, or some transaction takes place with reference to land; they leave the whole matter to be carried out by the solicitors; and the fact that there is a land registry, and that the land might be registered occurs in truth to very few owners indeed. I have already quoted my own case. I purchase a small piece of land. I should have been glad if such a measure as this had been in force, where, as a matter of course, the land passed on the register in consequence of the transaction; but one has many things to think about, and the idea of the land register only occurred to me when the transaction was in progress. Therefore, all I venture to do is to utter a protest that the extent to which the land registry has been used is no evidence of the extent to which it would be used if its advantages were known and realised, as I am quite sure they would be under such a system as is proposed by this Bill.

Bill read 3ª.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR : I propose an Amendment in consequence of a suggestion made by my noble Friend Viscount Cross, in order to meet a point raised by him in the Standing Committee, and which I promised to consider.

Amendment agreed to, and Bill passed.

### COURTS OF LAW FEES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said it had passed through the other House, and it was to enable the Court of Justiciary and the Court of Session in Scotland to regulate the fees in those Courts. The present powers for doing so did not appear to be altogether sufficient.

Bill read 2ª.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The EARL OF KIMBERLEY) moved that, as there was no business to-morrow, the House should meet at a quarter-past Four o'clock. At the next Evening Sitting, on Tuesday, the 30th, the House would meet at a quarter-past Four o'clock.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at Five minutes before Five o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, 8th April 1895.*

The House met shortly after Three of the Clock.

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt—"Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Minehead, Morecambe, Moy River, and Woody Bay."

Bill presented accordingly, and read first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 197.]

### ULTIMUS HÆRES (SCOTLAND) (ACCOUNT AND LIST OF ESTATES).

Copy ordered

"Of Returns of Abstract Account of the Receipts and Payments of the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, Scotland, in the year ended the 31st day of December 1894, in the Administration of Estates and Treasure Trove on behalf of the Crown; and of Alphabetical List of Estates which fell to the Crown as Ultimus Hæres in Scotland, administered by the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer, in the year ended the 31st day of December 1894."—*(Sir John Hibbert.)*

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 207.]

### NEW WRIT ISSUED.

For the Mid Division of Norfolk *v.* Mr. Clement Higgins, Steward of the Chiltern Hundreds.—*(Mr. H. T. Anstruther.)*

### MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

*MR. SPEAKER addressed the House, announcing his intention of retiring from the Chair, as followeth (all the Members being uncovered):—

I ask leave to intervene for a few moments before the regular business of the day is proceeded with, in order that I may make an announcement to the House—an announcement which I should have wished to make before, but in making which at this moment I hope I am, to the best of my power, consulting the convenience of the House. Considerations of health, which I cannot overlook, have obliged me to come to a decision—a decision at which I have arrived, I hope I need not assure the House, after deep deliberation and with the utmost reluctance. ["Hear, hear!"] Elected to this Chair more than 11 years ago, and thrice re-elected, I have passed through many Sessions. I desire unreservedly to say that I have received from all sides of the House a consideration and a forbearance which have greatly mitigated the sense of responsibility, and greatly alleviated the mere physical labour of sitting in this Chair. I have passed through many Sessions, some of storm and stress, some others of comparative, but only of comparative, repose. But in all that time I desire to acknowledge most earnestly, and from the bottom of my heart, the way in which hon. Members on both sides and on all sides of the House have treated me. If during that time I have given offence to any one Member, or more Members, or to any section of the House, I hope that an Act of Oblivion may be passed. [*Cheers.*] If I have ever deviated from that calm which should characterise the utterances of the occupant of this Chair, I hope every single Member of the House will believe me when I say that I have never been consciously actuated by any personal or political feeling—[*Loud cheers*]—and that, in all I have done and said, I have, at least according to my poor judgment, tried to consult the advantage and the permanent interests of this Assembly. [*Cheers.*] Speaking as your representative, and speaking on my own behalf, I desire to thank all officers of this House—all those who are in any way concerned with enabling this great legislative machine to go on smoothly from day to day—for the assistance which I have received from them. I desire, inasmuch as I am more immediately brought into contact with them, to thank the Clerk of this House and the two Gentlemen who sit with him at the Table. [*Cheers.*] The House knows their services; but no one knows better than he who is now taking his leave of the House, and who has so often taken advantage of their counsel and advice—no one, I say, can have a deeper consciousness than I of their unostentatious labours. [*Cheers.*] I have said that I have passed through many Sessions; I have witnessed many changes, I have witnessed changes in the procedure of this House, and I would venture to say that although Standing Orders and Rules of this House, when they are enacted and are in force, ought to be observed both in the spirit and in the letter, yet that neither Rules, nor Orders, nor Standing Orders of this House are of permanent and lasting obligation. They must change as circumstances change. One thing I venture to think is absolutely essential, and that is that we should pay regard to those honourable traditions, and to that great code of law, unwritten though it be, which is of imperative and stringent obligation, if that continuity of sentiment is to be maintained to which all institutions owe so much, to which this House has at all times attached so much value, and to the observance of which it owes so many inestimable advantages. [*Cheers.*] Finally, let me say a few parting words in conclusion; and I wish to speak, not with the brief remnant of authority which is still left to me with the sands of my official life rapidly running out, I would rather speak as a Member of 30 years' experience in this House who speaks to his brother Members and comrades, if I may dare to use the term. [*Cheers.*] I would fain hope that, by the co-operation of all its Members, this House may continue to be a pattern and a model to foreign nations, and to those great peoples who have left our shores and have carried our blood, our race, our language, our institutions, and our habits of thought to the uttermost parts of the earth. I would fain indulge in the belief and the hope, and as I speak with the traditions of this House and its glorious memories crowding on my mind, that hope and that belief become stronger and more emphasised, though with both hope and belief I would couple an earnest but an humble prayer that this House may have centuries of honour, of dignity, and of usefulness before it; and that it may continue to hold, not a prominent only, but a first and foremost position among the Legislative Assemblies of the world. [*Loud cheers.*]

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Mr. Speaker, the House has heard with deep and painful emotion the announcement you have found it your duty to make. [" Hear, hear."] The sentiment to which that announcement gives rise in the heart of every man—I say it, I am sure, with truth—wherever in this House he sits, is one of profound regret at the immeasurable loss which we are destined to sustain and of heartfelt gratitude to you, Sir, for the memorable services which you have rendered to this House and to your country. [*Cheers.*] This is not the occasion on which we are to give adequate utterance to those feelings; but I am sure I shall have the cordial support of the House when I give notice that to-morrow I shall move :—

> " That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than 11 years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal and ability with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House."

When that Motion has been carried, as it will be, I am sure, *nemine contradicente*, I shall also move :—

> " That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying Her Majesty that she will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of Her Royal favour upon the Right Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House, and assuring Her Majesty that whatever expense Her Majesty shall think fit to be incurred upon that account this House will make good the same." [*Cheers.*]

**Mr. BALFOUR**: It will to-morrow be my melancholy privilege to second the Resolution of which the right hon. Gentleman has just given notice. I will, therefore, do nothing more on the present occasion than express the profound grief, on personal as well as public grounds, with which I have listened to the announcement which you, Sir, have made from the Chair.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### IRISH CARBONIFEROUS SANDSTONE.

**Mr. R. A. YERBURGH** (Chester): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that quarries exist at Mount Charles, County Donegal, of very beautiful and durable building stone (carboniferous sandstone), which has the advantage of keeping its colour when Portland stone will turn black, and that the said stone has been used in the new buildings of the Royal Dublin Society in Kildare Street; and whether he will take steps to have it used in public buildings in England and Scotland?

**The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS** (Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I have no knowledge of the stone referred to by the hon. Member, and I should fear that the cost of carriage to London, or, indeed, to any of the eastern or central districts of Great Britain, would be prohibitive of its use. If, however, the hon. Member will cause me to be furnished with a specimen of the stone, and with further particulars as to quality and cost, and as to means and cost of transport, I shall be happy to have the matter examined into in my Department.

### WICKLOW BREAKWATER.

**Mr. J. O'CONNOR**: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Wicklow, Mr. J. Sweetman, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the very critical condition of the breakwater at Wicklow has been reported to the Board of Public Works, the engineer having stated that no one could now give this pier a month's lease; whether he is aware that the Commissioners of the Harbour, who are at present expending some £2,000 with a contractor on urgent temporary repairs, have during the past ten months made constant application to the Treasury, through the Chief Secretary and through the Board of Public Works, for a grant to enable them to secure the breakwater and improve the harbour; that they have obtained and laid before the Board of Public Works, by its directions, plans, specifications, and a tender for repairing and improving the harbour for £22,500, on which Sir Alexander Rendel has recommended additions and modifications, bringing the cost up to some £30,000; and that the town of Wicklow, with a valuation of £5,266, in addition to paying its share of the £1,940 annually paid for the £40,000 harbour loan by that district, contributes £540 annually towards this harbour in interest on the former £12,000 harbour loan, and is unable to contribute anything further than the surplus income of the port (which it is willing to do if given the power) in raising a loan of £10,000, provided the Treasury gives the balance required as a grant; and whether, considering the present very critical condition of this harbour, and its importance to the locality and also to the Government now that a cordite factory has been started in the neighbourhood, he will take immediate steps to give a grant for the necessary repairs before it is blocked by the collapse of its breakwater?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham): I fully recognise the importance and difficulty of this matter, and it is receiving every attention. The Exchequer has already advanced on loans sums amounting to £46,000 towards the construction of the harbour, and the Government is prepared to afford further assistance, but I cannot admit that the locality is unable to contribute anything by way of guarantee or otherwise.

### A BARNSLEY POLICE CASE.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmforth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the report of a case, heard before Mr. C. Harvey and other Barnsley magistrates on the 27th March, in which the solicitor defending certain miners against a charge of playing pitch and toss, asked a police witness for the prosecution who was with him on the occasion in question, but Superintendent Kene objected to this question being answered by the witness, and the Bench allowed the objection, upon which the solicitor retired from the case; and whether he will make inquiries into the circumstances of the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I have made inquiry into the case, and am informed that the facts are as stated in the question. Superintendent Kene did object to one of the witnesses, a police constable, answering the question, who accompanied another constable and himself at the time he saw the defendants gaming. The objection was taken on the ground of privilege, and that it would not be public policy to disclose the name of the third person. The Justices upheld the objection. I cannot interfere in what is after all only a question as to improper admission or rejection of evidence, unless I have reason to believe that some substantial injustice has been done, which, so far as I am aware, there is no ground for suggesting in this case.

### SCIENCE AND ART STUDENTS IN IRELAND.

MR. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether he is aware that during the last five years in Ireland there has been a falling off in the attendance of science and art students of 26 per cent., whereas within the same period the number of science and art students has increased by about 60 per cent. in England; and whether equal financial assistance will be proportionately granted to Great Britain and Ireland?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The facts are correctly stated in the first part of the question. But during the last two years for which the figures are available there has been a slight increase in the numbers for Ireland. As regards financial assistance, the grants offered to Ireland by the Science and Art Department are more liberal than to Great Britain. The grants for fittings, apparatus, and examples, and those for technical instruction, which have been suspended in Great Britain while the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act of 1890 remains in force, are continued in Ireland, the other grants being the same in both countries.

### IRISH POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. F. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General why the Post Office authorities discontinued a mail car through the village of

Ballylooby, county Tipperary, thereby causing much inconvenience to the inhabitants; is he aware that the people of that district are willing to give the Post Office authorities a guarantee for the cost of sending a mail car through Ballylooby; and will he consent to have a mail car run on the Ballylooby route daily, as before, on condition that the Post Office is indemnified by a guarantee for the expenses of that mail car service?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Arnold Morley, Nottingham, E.): I regret that I cannot sanction a service by day mail to Ballylooby. The village did, it is true, enjoy that accommodation when the day mail car to Clogheen ran through the village; but it became necessary to divert this car in order to serve a district receiving a considerable amount of correspondence, while there were only three or four letters a day for Ballylooby, which suffer delay in consequence of the change. In these circumstances it would be hardly possible for the Post Office to establish a mail car under guarantee. But if the district choose to put on a car, I might be able to take advantage of it for the few letters referred to.

Mr. A. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received a memorial relative to the present night mail postal service to Lismore, Cappoquin, Tallow, Ballyduff, and surrounding district; and whether he is prepared to recommend changes in the direction desired by memorialists?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I have quite recently received the memorial referred to, and inquiry is being made into the subject of it; but some weeks must elapse before I can be in a position to come to a decision.

## THE CASE OF PATRICK FINNIGAN.

Mr. M. M. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—(1) if his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Finnigan, at present undergoing a sentence of penal servitude at Mountjoy Prison on conviction of complicity in murder; (2) is he aware that it was proved at the trial by the Crown the murder in question was instigated by a land agent named Regan, who was proved to be present and assisted at the outrage, and who escaped from justice by a flight to America; that a police constable named Muldowney, who was engaged in protection of the said Regan, was convicted, and sentenced to death for complicity in the murder; and that the Attorney General entered a *nolle prosequi* in regard to a number of men who were arrested and charged at the same time as Muldowney and Finnigan, and against whom precisely the same evidence was in existence, on the ground that such evidence was not sufficient to justify a conviction; (3) was the sentence of Constable Muldowney commuted from the capital penalty to penal servitude, and has Constable Muldowney been yet released; (4) is he aware that the jury on the first trial refused to convict Patrick Finnigan, and that he has now suffered in all over 12 years' imprisonment; and (5) will he give a favourable consideration to Finnigan's case, with a view to a commutation of his sentence?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): My attention has been drawn to the case of this convict, who was convicted of murder in August 1884, and sentenced to death. The sentence, however, was subsequently commuted to penal servitude for life. The facts are substantially as stated in the second and fourth paragraphs, except that, as I am informed, Regan was a land steward (not land agent), and that it is not known upon what grounds the Attorney General of the day entered a *nolle prosequi* in the other cases referred to. Muldowney's sentence was also commuted to one of penal servitude for life; he has not been released, being at present confined in Mountjoy Prison. Finnigan's case was considered in 1886, 1888, 1891, and again in April of last year. As at present advised, there seems to be no sufficient grounds for ordering his release.

## SHIPMENT OF SAILORS AND FIREMEN AT FOREIGN PORTS.

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state what fees Consular officers are allowed to charge for the shipment of seamen on board of English vessels in foreign ports; whether he is aware that certain agents who use the Consul's office in the port of Antwerp charge seamen 10s. each as a shipping fee; whether he is aware that seamen are unable to secure employment on board of English ships in the port of Antwerp unless through the agency of these men; whether he is also aware that crews are signed on by these agents in the absence of the Consul; and whether he can see his way to prevent these men using the Consul's office for the purpose of extorting such fees from the seamen?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The statutory fee paid to Government is two shillings for each seaman shipped. We have no knowledge as to the alleged action of agents, but if evidence is given an inquiry will be instituted.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state how many able seamen and firemen were shipped on board of English vessels during the year 1894 in the ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp, and Rotterdam; whether he can state how many of such sailors and firemen were British and how many were foreigners; and whether he will cause to be published in the *Labour Gazette* the number of foreigners signed on as able seamen and firemen on British vessels in British ports, also the number of foreigners signed on as able seamen and firemen on British vessels in the ports of Hamburg, Bremen, Antwerp and Rotterdam?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The information asked for by the hon. Member is not in the possession of the Board of Trade. As respects the last paragraph of the question it would not be safe to undertake to publish in the *Labour Gazette* any particular information, as in editing the *Gazette* it is necessary to deal with the contents according to the varying exigencies of space.

## ACCOMMODATION FOR SEAMEN.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he intends to take any steps to carry out the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Labour with reference to increasing the seamen's accommodation on board of ship, from 72 cubic feet to 120 cubic feet; what accommodation is allowed to convicts, soldiers, and paupers; why the Board of Trade does not insist on shipowners who carry Lascar seamen on board of their ships, allowing these men the 72 cubic feet of space as set forth in the Merchant Shipping Act, 1872; whether it is a fact that on board of several steamships conveying Her Majesty's mails, and who carry Lascar crews, that these men are only allowed 36 cubic feet of space; and what steps he intends to take with a view of enforcing the Merchant Shipping Act on board of all vessels, and especially on those vessels receiving a subsidy for the carrying of Her Majesty's mails?

MR. BRYCE: Such steps as the Board of Trade have been able to take (without fresh legislation) with regard to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Labour affecting seamen, have already been taken, and are explained in a paper (c. 7540–1894) recently presented to Parliament. The question of increasing the minimum crew space allowance will be considered when an opportunity for legislation occurs. I am unable to furnish the hon. Member with particulars of the accommodation allowed on transports or other vessels not coming under Board of Trade survey. All British merchant vessels (whether carrying Her Majesty's mails or not) are required to have for each seaman or apprentice a space of not less than 72 cubic feet; and penalties are provided for contravention of this requirement. Complaints have, however, recently been made to the Board of Trade that, in certain vessels carrying Lascar seamen only the space (36 cubic feet for each man) required by the Indian Act, has been provided. The owners of these vessels have been informed that the provisions of the Imperial Act must be complied with, and the matter is receiving the careful attention of the Board of Trade surveyors. Representations have also been made to the Secretary of State for India.

## WEIGHING SEAMEN'S FOOD.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the

Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a report of a trial in the Central District Court at Newfoundland, where Thomas Weatherill and William Prentice, of the vessel *Elite*, sued Captain Hargreaves for supplying them with food which was considerably under the weight agreed upon in their articles of agreement; whether it is a fact that the men alleged that the balance which was used for weighing the food was defective; and whether there is any law to compel owners to supply their vessels with weights and measures which are thoroughly adjusted and certified to be correct; and, if there is no such law, will he at an early date bring in a Bill making it compulsory on all shipowners to supply their vessels with properly adjusted weights and measures?

MR. BRYCE: My attention had not been called to the case referred to in the question until I received a communication, dated the 3rd inst., from the hon. Member himself. I have, however, been in communication with the managing owner of the *Elite*. He appears to have no knowledge of the circumstances, and states that the finding of the ship in provisions rests with the master, who is also half-owner. The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894 (Section 201), provides that proper weights and measures shall be kept on board ship, and the master is liable to a fine (£10) if he neglects to comply with this requirement. I have given directions for the weights and measures of the *Elite* to be inspected upon the next return of the vessel to this country.

## BALLYMACARRETT POOR LAW ELECTION.

MR. S. YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if his attention has been called to a protest lodged by Mr. John Morton, J.P., one of the candidates for the office of Guardian at the present Poor Law election for the Ballymacarrett electoral division of the Belfast Union, against the nomination of Dr. William Gibson and Mr. James Hollywood, two of the other candidates, upon the ground that they were jointly nominated by Mr. Wolff, of 7, Station Street, who, as the Poor Rate Collector reports, was not in occupation of these premises since 1st March last; (2) whether Mr. Wolff was entitled to vote for or nominate candidates as Poor Law Guardians in respect of these premises at the present election for this division, and whether the nomination of Dr. William Gibson and Mr. James Hollywood is rendered void by reason of the disqualification of their nominator, Mr. Wolff; and, (3) what action the Local Government Board intend to take in the matter?

MR. J. MORLEY: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph. The Returning Officer has not yet made his return of the persons elected as Guardians for the Belfast Union. If, however, the gentlemen in question should be returned as Guardians, and their right to act in that capacity be questioned, the Local Government Board will, of course, carefully consider any representations that may be made to them in the matter.

## CODE CABLEGRAMS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has observed that the new official vocabulary for code cablegrams, prepared by the International Telegraph Office at Berne, is objected to, on the grounds, among others, that it contains words identical in signals with other words, words with only one signal difference from other words, words with only one letter difference from other words, words with first letter's signals dangerously like others, and words representing names of articles of commerce, coins, numerals, and firms, and localities; and whether this vocabulary can still be amended and extended, or whether it is binding, as it stands, on the public; and, if amendments will be accepted, whether he will suggest that the official compilers of it should consult with two or more British telegraph experts, and with the Associated Chambers of Commerce, with a view to removing the defects complained of?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: I am aware that objections have been raised on the grounds mentioned by the hon. Member; but I may remind the House that the new vocabulary does not come into force until the 1st January 1898. There is ample time for consideration in the interval, and the matter is receiving careful attention.

## THE EAST LONDON WATER COMPANY.

**Mr. ARCHIBALD GROVE** (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received a petition from certain burgesses of the borough of West Ham, stating that, owing to the negligence of the East London Water Company in not causing their mains to be repaired, the direct supply of water is still cut off, and the public health thereby endangered, owing to the accumulation of sewage matter; and whether he can take any steps to compel the Company to fulfil their statutory obligations?

**The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I have received the petition referred to in the question, and I have communicated with the East London Waterworks Company with regard to it. I am informed that the road in which the petitioners reside is now supplied with water, the repairs to the pipes having been completed on Thursday last.

**Mr. GROVE** asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that in various other localities of West Ham the same complaint was made, that for three months less one week the water supply had been cut off.

**Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE**: I believe that was so; but I have no power to enforce proceedings.

## HAWAIIAN REVOLUTION.

**Sir T. ESMONDE** (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Queen Liliokuolani is kept a prisoner in a barracks at Honolulu; who is responsible for her safe keeping; and whether it would be possible to make representations to whatever body now constitutes the Government of Hawaii suggesting the advisability of allowing her to reside in her palace under a guard, if a guard be necessary under the circumstances?

**Sir EDWARD GREY**: We have heard that the Queen has been sentenced to imprisonment, but the matter is not one in which Her Majesty's Government could interfere, nor are there any grounds upon which they could found a representation.

## THE TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

**Sir T. ESMONDE**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is yet in a position to give any information as to the intention of the Treasury with reference to the Resolution passed by the County Kerry Grand Jury concerning the Tralee and Dingle Railway?

**Sir JOHN HIBBERT**: The Grand Jury's Resolution asks for a free grant of £15,000, but my hon. Friend will remember that when the question of a loan for the improvement of the line was under discussion a year ago, the Treasury stated that such a question could not be entertained in the absence of new and satisfactory arrangements for the working of the line. These conditions not having yet been fulfilled by the Grand Jury, I fear that I am not in a position at present to consider the question of a loan. A free grant is open to far more serious difficulties, and I need not remind my hon. Friend that when the exceptional compassionate grant of £2,500 was made last year, it was made on the express condition that it represented the final concession of the Government.

## SCOTCH PARISHES.

**Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN** (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the petitions from Savoch and other *quoad sacra* parishes (possessing School Boards) to be constituted parishes for Parish Council purposes; and whether he will give an assurance that full opportunity will be afforded before the next Parish Council Election takes place for a renewal of such applications, and that, if necessary, legislation will be introduced to facilitate such applications?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir George Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am aware that the applications from Savoch and other *quoad sacra* parishes have been refused, for what appear to me substantial reasons. No *quoad sacra* parish of the character and class of Savoch has been made a civil parish. If the applications are, under changed circumstances, renewed, they will, as a matter of course, have full consideration. The existing law gives ample power to grant them if such a course is deemed expedient.

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

**Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN** (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) in what portion of the parish of Aughamore have the relief works been opened, as mentioned by him on Monday last; (2) what proofs of the prevalence of exceptional distress are recognised and admitted by the Local Government Inspectors; and (3) whether he will instruct these Inspectors to consult with the Priests in the distressed districts?

MR. J. MORLEY: The works referred to in the first paragraph are at Castleroyan and between Kilkelly and Kiltimagh. As regards the second paragraph, the Inspectors are under no restrictions in the matter referred to. They accept any proofs, and form their conclusions upon any evidence which presents itself, and which appears to them to be reliable. It has already been intimated to the Inspectors that they should take every possible opportunity of consulting the Clergy in the course of their inquiries in distressed districts, and I understand it is now their practice to do so.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: The right hon. Gentleman's answer to my question on Monday gave the people of the locality to understand that he had ordered works to be opened at Aughamore, while it now appears that he was only referring to the works opened at Kiltimagh.

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot say that I connect my answer with the question of my hon. Friend, but I will make further inquiry. The works at Kiltimagh are the only works opened.

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman, where there is direct and absolute contradiction between the reports made to him and the information furnished to us, take some means of satisfying himself by independent inquiry?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am going to spend a portion of my so-called holiday in paying a visit to Ireland, and I hope, while on the spot, to be able to get such information as will prove satisfactory to hon. Members.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman know that the works at Kiltimagh are four miles from Aughamore, and that the people of Aughamore have to walk eight miles?

MR. J. MORLEY: I don't consider that going four miles to work and four miles back is anything unheard of.

MR. J. G. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has been able to take any action with reference to the representations made to him in a letter dated 28th February, by the Rev. Peter Kelly, P.P., Ardara, County Donegal, directing his attention to the fact that Ardara was one of the poorest parishes in the County of Donegal, and that the effects of a failure of the potato crop fell with especial severity on the inhabitants from the fact that there is no developed system of fishing or other means of obtaining a livelihood, and proposing remedies by the commencement of relief works and a better system of Local Government Board inspection for the relief of distress; whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings of a public meeting held in Ardara, as reported in the *Londonderry Journal* of 1st April, at which Father Kelly, who presided, strongly urged that men willing to work for 7s. a week should obtain employment instantly, at which meeting resolutions were unanimously carried urging on the Executive the necessity of starting public works, and characterising the Local Government Board's system of inspection as futile and misleading; and, whether he will take immediate steps, having regard to the weight of these representations, for the alleviation of the sufferings of the people of this locality?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has been made aware that the Guardians of the Glenties Union, at their meeting held on 29th March, passed a resolution urgently pressing on the Government the necessity for opening relief works in certain parts of the union, and complaining that, notwithstanding repeated representations of theirs to the like effect, no practical steps have been taken to meet the requirements of the case, stating also that the guardians are opposed to any further extension of outdoor relief, inasmuch as the rates in some of their electoral divisions already amount to 6s. in the pound, and that further taxation would impoverish the union; whether he is aware that, at a subsequent meeting of the same Board held on the 1st of April, a similar statement of facts and a request for a speedy opening of relief works were put forward as matters of urgency requiring from the Government immediate attention; whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings of a public meeting held a few days ago at Ardara, in the Glenties Union, presided over by Major Johnstone, J.P., Chairman of the Glenties Board, and to the speeches delivered on that occasion by the Rev. Peter Kelly, P.P., Mr. Congdon, Major Johnstone, Mr. Crumley, Mr. M'Groarty, P.L.G., Mr. Gilbride, P.L.G., and other gentlemen, all testifying from personal knowledge to the existence of acute distress in that district, and complaining of the neglect of the Government to do anything for its alleviation; and whether he will direct that some practical action shall be promptly taken to cope with the serious state of affairs referred to in those speeches and resolutions?

MR. J. MORLEY: My attention has been drawn to a report of the proceedings at the meetings of the Guardians of the Glenties Union, and at the public meeting referred to, as well as to the representations made by the reverend Gentleman named in the question of my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for South Donegal. Relief works were opened some time ago in several divisions of this union, and the other parts of the union in which works have not been established have recently been visited by two of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. Both of these gentlemen made a very careful investigation of the condition of the poorer classes, and both concur in the opinion that at the present time there exists no necessity for the opening of additional works in the union. As regards the incidence of the poor rate in the union, I am informed that there is only one division out of 27 in the union in which the rate is 5s. 10d. in the pound, and that in the remaining 26 divisions the rate averages about 3s. in the pound. The view appears to have prevailed at the public meeting referred to, that a man who is "willing to accept" a wage of 7s. a week should be afforded employment on relief works, and in reference to this, I have only to observe that although the rate of wages on relief works has been fixed at a low figure, yet their primary object is not to afford employment to persons because they are "willing" to work for this low remuneration, but to render assistance to persons who, being in occupation of land, are precluded from availing themselves of the usual means of obtaining poor law relief open to other persons.

MR. MACNEILL: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to the utmost dissatisfaction which exists at present as regards the method of inspection pursued by those inspectors. Is he aware that these inspectors apparently do not consult the priests of the districts concerned, that they go as a kind of picnickers in tandem from one place to another. I wish to know, if that is brought to the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman, if he will take any steps whatever to obtain a complete and satisfactory inspection?

MR. J. MORLEY: I should deprecate the description my hon. and learned Friend has thought right to give of these public officers——

MR. MACNEILL: To which I adhere.

MR. J. MORLEY: I know so far as I can know anything at all without actual visual inspection—I know that these gentlemen go through an enormous amount of conscientious labour, and very trying duties. For my own part I take what they tell me, and take the reports with which they furnish me, as giving as good information as they can have access to. With regard to the first question, I am aware, of course with regret, that dissatisfaction does exist. I am not very much surprised at it, because there is very great distress, but with the means at my disposal it is impossible for me to meet the wishes of the clergy and others in coping with this unfortunate state of affairs.

## THE POST OFFICE AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

MR. D. NAOROJI (Finsbury Central): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Post Office has been employing men permanently or temporarily in the Electric Lighting Department at rates of pay considerably lower than those recognised by the Electrical Trades Union for wiring and jointing; and, if so, whether, as the trade union rates are adopted by the majority of electric lighting firms, and in accordance with the Resolution of the House of Commons that Government Departments should pay the rates of wages current in the trade, he will take steps to raise the wages to the recognised standard?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: The subject of the hon. Member's question was brought before me last year by a Deputation from the London Trades Council, which included representatives of the Electrical Trades Union; but after full inquiry I was unable to find any ground for complaint. The circumstances have not, I think, changed in any way; but if the hon. Member is in a position to bring any specific case to my notice I shall be glad to inquire into it.

## RIVER ROBE DRAINAGE.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in consequence of the drainage of the River Robe remaining unfinished, the lands about Crossboyne are frequently flooded, to the great loss and injury of the poor farmers of the district; and that the Catholic chapel of the place is also flooded on those occasions; whether he has been furnished with high medical testimony as to the very injurious effects upon the health of the inhabitants from the state of things complained of; whether this unfinished Government work can be completed for the small sum of £1,000; and in view of the benefits which would be conferred by the completion of this work, will he state what he proposes to do about it?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the lands in the locality referred to are occasionally flooded, as stated, and that the medical officers of health have reported that the drainage of the river would be an advantage to the health of the district. The Board of Works state they have no information as to the cost of the drainage work in question, and that no arterial drainage work can be carried out unless under the provisions of the Act of 1863, which requires a District Drainage Board to be formed. The Board of Works also state that the drainage of the River Robe cannot be described as "an unfinished Government work," inasmuch as this portion of the Lough Mask and River Robe drainage District was not considered necessary and was not undertaken.

## ST. OLAVE'S UNION, SOUTHWARK.

MR. J. C. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the St. Olave's Union, Southwark, stating that the medical officer had complained of the action of two Guardians being found in a duty room with two nurses at 11.30 p.m. (one of the former smoking a cigar), under the plea of visiting the wards; and whether he would take steps to have suitable hours fixed for visiting the infirmary by Guardians in accordance with the medical officer's request?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: My attention has been called to this matter, and I find that the facts are substantially as stated in the question. The Local Government Board have not thought it expedient to fix the hours during which a Guardian may visit the Workhouse or Infirmary; but they have expressed a decided opinion that the case would be a very exceptional one in which it would be proper that a Guardian should pay such a visit late at night, and that to justify his doing so there ought to be strong *prima facie* grounds for believing that special and unusual circumstances render the visit necessary. The Board have also stated that a visit late at night ought not to be paid to a sick ward, unless it had been previously ascertained from the medical officer that it would not be detrimental to any of the sick occupants of the ward.

MR. MACDONA: Are the Guardians justified in smoking cigars?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I should say not.

## THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY CODE.

MR. P. J. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the English Police Regulations are available for public use, and would he have any objection to place the Royal Irish Constabulary Code upon the Table of the House?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the London Metropolitan Police Orders are not available for public use, and under the circumstances I see no sufficient reason for departing from the decision previously laid down in this matter, namely, that the Royal Irish Constabulary code is a Departmental publication intended solely for the guidance of the Force, and that it would be inexpedient to place a copy on the Table or in the Library.

## THE CAVALRY MANŒUVRES IN BERKSHIRE.

**Colonel HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, if he has any objection to laying upon the Table of the House the Report of General Keith Fraser, Inspector General of Cavalry, upon the recent Cavalry Manœuvres in Berkshire, and the best means of developing the efficiency of that arm of the Service?

***The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR** (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): This is an Official Report made for the information of the Commander-in-Chief and Secretary of State. It has never been the practice to publish such Reports by presentation to Parliament; to do so would tend to diminish at once the responsibility of the recognised authorities and the freedom with which the Officers report their views and recommendations.

## VOLUNTEER CAMPS.

**Colonel HOWARD VINCENT**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, if, having regard to the long notice which Volunteers following active commercial and industrial pursuits have to give of their desire to take their summer holiday, during the week selected by the Authorities for Auxiliary Forces manœuvres and camps at Aldershot or elsewhere, he will endeavour to have the definite arrangements made and announced as early as practicable?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: It rests with Volunteer Corps to propose when and where they will hold their annual camps, and the regulations require that their proposals should be formulated by the 1st March. It is generally understood that what is known as the "Volunteer week" at Aldershot is that which embraces the August Bank Holiday, but as regards Aldershot and other places it is open to Corps to propose such dates as they may find most suitable.

## A RUSSIAN SAILOR.

**Mr. W. P. BYLES** (York, W. R., Shipley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware a Russian sailor named Victor Ivanovsky, now resident in London, was stopped in broad daylight, and in the high road, at Hammersmith, on the 26th March, by two detectives in plain clothes, was interrogated, searched and threatened with arrest, although his behaviour was perfectly peaceful and orderly; and whether, seeing that Russian residents in this country are entitled to the same liberties and the same freedom from police molestation as other citizens, he will take such measures as will prevent the recurrence of incidents similar to the one referred to?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I have made careful inquiry into the circumstances of this case, with the result that I am satisfied that the information on which my hon. Friend's question is based is in many respects misleading and exaggerated. All that happened was that Ivanovsky was asked his name and address, which he gave without demur, and produced an envelope which he had in his pocket in verification of his statement. He was not searched nor was he threatened with arrest. The officers had no warrant for his arrest, nor any ground for taking him into custody. Russian residents in this country who keep within the law, are entitled to the same liberties as Englishmen, and every care is and will be taken that their freedom is not molested. Nothing was done in this case which might not and would not under similar circumstances have been done to an Englishman. It would not be expedient in the public interest that I should state the reason which led the officers to ask this man's name and address, but if my hon. Friend wishes for further information I shall be happy to communicate with him privately.

**Mr. BYLES**: Would the right hon. Gentleman think it proper to state publicly in this House whether the London Police Force received any stimulus from the Russian Embassy?

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir; there was no communication of any kind.

### TELEGRAPHISTS' HOLIDAYS.

Mr. J. G. BUTCHER (York): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether it is customary at the Central Telegraph Office to grant to Telegraphists an extra day's leave of absence when a Bank Holiday coincides with the first day of their annual leave; whether, when a Bank Holiday does not coincide with first day, but does coincide with a subsequent day of their annual leave, it is the practice to withhold an additional day's leave of absence; and whether he will direct that in future an extra day's leave of absence be granted to Telegraphists when a Bank Holiday coincides with any day of their annual leave?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: An extra day's leave in lieu of a Bank Holiday is only given when the annual leave commences or expires on such a holiday. It has not hitherto been the practice to grant an extra day when the holiday falls in the middle of an officer's leave, but I will make further enquiries into this question.

### THE MADRAS STAFF CORPS.

Mr. W. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, if the circumstances connected with the bankruptcy of an officer in the Madras Staff Corps, and serving at Madras, have been brought under his notice; and what steps he intended to take with regard to this officer?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell) answering in the absence of Mr. H. H. Fowler: The Secretary of State has no knowledge of the matter to which the hon. Member's question refers, except from the documents forwarded to him by the hon. Member. He will ask the Government of India to inquire into the matter.

### MADAGASCAR.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it has been brought to his notice that the French Military Authorities in Madagascar open all letters, private and commercial, sent to and from British traders in that island; and whether it is possible in any way to obtain an abatement of this interference with correspondence?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): We have heard from our Vice-Consul at Mojanga that an *arrêté* was published there on the 21st February placing the postal service under the control of the Military Authorities, but nothing was said as to letters being opened.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the hon. Baronet inquire of the Postmaster General? I understand there have been a great many complaints addressed to the Postmaster General by traders in that island.

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY said he had made inquiries, and he had heard of no such complaints.

### THE COMPANIES WINDING-UP ACT.

Mr. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Report of the Board of Trade for the year 1894, under Section 29 of the Companies Winding-up Act, 1890, will be laid before Parliament; and whether he will undertake that the Report shall be in the hands of Members before the Vote is taken for the estimates of the amount required in the year ending 31st March 1896, to meet the deficiency of income from fees, &c., for the requirements of the Board of Trade under the Bankruptcy Acts, 1883 and 1890, and under the Companies Winding-up Act, 1890?

Mr. BRYCE said: The materials, which are very large and complicated, for the preparation of the Annual Report are being collected, and the Report itself will be prepared at the earliest possible moment. But it is not possible to give any undertaking as to the precise time at which it will be laid before Parliament.

### JABEZ BALFOUR.

Mr. C. J. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Supreme Court of Buenos Ayres has ordered the extradition of Jabez Balfour; and whether Jabez Balfour is yet in the custody of an officer of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR E. GREY: We are informed that the Supreme Court dismissed the final appeal, and that the British Police Officer was starting in charge of Balfour on board the *Tartar Prince.* I desire to take this opportunity of expressing satisfaction, which I am sure will be shared by the House, at the friendly conduct of the Argentine Government in fulfilling the Treaty obligations which now exist between the two Governments.

### SUB-POSTMASTERS.

MR. C. COLSTON (Gloucester, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether such requisites as string, bag wax, blotting paper, red and black inks, lights and firing for office use—the latter of which are important items in bad weather, and also where there is an early arrival of mails—have to be provided from the private purse of sub-postmasters, or whether they are supplied by the General Post Office?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: The articles mentioned by the hon. Member are, as a rule, provided by sub-postmasters out of their official emoluments. At the great majority of small sub-post offices, which are carried on in shops and other places of private business, the amount of these articles required for official use is so trifling that the expense is hardly appreciable. At some of the larger offices, where more is required, an allowance is made to the sub-postmaster to enable him to provide the necessary stores. At all offices where there is an early arrival of mails, a special allowance is granted to the sub-postmasters on that account.

### ENGLISH MAILS IN SPAIN.

MR. C. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware of the inconvenience caused to the whole community of Gibraltar by the very unsatisfactory arrangements made for the transit of the English mails through Spain; and, whether, considering the large amount of correspondence involved, amounting in the case of letters only to about 10,000 a week, he will take steps to secure from the Spanish Postal Authorities a more rapid and regular forwarding of the mails.

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: So long ago as June 1893 a letter was addressed to the Spanish Post Office calling attention to the defective communication between this country and Gibraltar by railway through Spain, and since that time the British Post Office has done its best to induce the Spanish Postal Administration to bring about an improvement in the service, but I regret to say without success. The hon. Member is doubtless aware that I have no power to enforce alterations of postal services in foreign countries; but this matter shall not be lost sight of, and I will not fail to take advantage of the first favourable opportunity to again urge an improvement.

### PAYMENT OF JURORS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. J. ROSS (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the Jurors' Association in Ireland, the Irish newspapers of all classes of opinion, and several of the Grand Juries have expressed their strong approval of the Payment of Jurors (Ireland) Bill, and whether, under these circumstances, the Opposition of the Government to the measure will be withdrawn?

MR. J. MORLEY stated that no representations appeared to have been received in favour of the present Bill, but Resolutions were received in 1892 by the Irish Government of that day in favour of the payment of jurors. The case was one of magnitude, both on the question of principle and on account of the financial considerations involved, and it was desirable that it should receive careful consideration.

MR. ROSS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not seen that Irish newspapers of all shades of opinion backed up this Bill?

MR. J. MORLEY: Well, no, Sir. I do not think that I have seen that Irish newspapers of all shades of opinion have backed up this Bill, but still I do know it is supported by hon. Gentlemen in this House representing all Parties in Ireland.

MR. ROSS pressed the right hon. Gentleman to say whether the Government could not see their way to introduce a Bill dealing with the whole question?

MR. J. MORLEY: No; I do not think this Session it will be possible.

## VENEZUELA.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the Venezuelan Government has yet replied to the demand for explanations of the conduct of Venezuelan Forces in hauling down the British flag on British territory, making prisoners of British police officers, and forcibly conducting them out of British into Venezuelan territory; and, if so, can he now state the nature of that reply?

Sir EDWARD GREY: No communication has yet been received from the Venezuelan Government.

## FIRE AT TUAM.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Galway, Colonel Nolan, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, is he aware that on the 2nd of April various telegrams were received in Galway from the Tuam Town Commissioners and others, asking that the Galway fire engines should be forwarded speedily to extinguish a serious fire at Tuan; and that application was made to the Midland Great Western Railway for a special train to carry the Galway engines to Tuam but was refused; and, if the Railway Commissioners will inquire into the reasons for such a refusal?

Mr. BRYCE: I have communicated with the Company, and learn that it is not the case that the Company's officials, either at Galway or Dublin, refused to send forward fire engines to Tuam. I am informed that the Station Master at Galway agreed, if required, to run an engine to Athenry, and further, that the Chairman of the Company provided an engine and carriages to take a portion of the Dublin Fire Brigade and engine to Tuam if required to do so.

## UNSTAMPED POSTCARDS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General, under what authority, statutory or other, the fine levied on the delivery of an unstamped postcard amounts to four times the deficient postage, and in the case of an unstamped, or insufficiently stamped, letter, to only twice the deficient postage? and whether he will again consider the propriety of reducing the charge of 2d. for an unstamped postcard weighing a quarter of an ounce, seeing that only 1d. is charged for an unstamped newspaper weighing nearly two ounces?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I am not prepared to recommend that the question of reducing the surcharge referred to should be reconsidered. As I have already told the hon Member, unstamped postcards are treated as letters, according to the practice throughout the Postal Union, and are charged with the same postage as unpaid letters under the authority of a Treasury Warrant of 24th August 1894.

## CASTLEREA AND BALLAGHADERREEN RAILWAY.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if he would explain in what respect, if funds were available, a gnarantee from the Treasury would be illegal in the case of the proposed line of railway from Castlerea to Ballaghaderreen, whilst it has been found to be legal in the case of the Ballinrobe and Claremorris, Loughrea and Attymas, and Mitchelstown and Fermoy Railways; in what respect do these latter lines differ in construction from the heavy main lines in connection with which they have been built; and, whether, in order to clear up any legal doubts upon the matter and allay anxiety as to the legality of the guarantee in reference to the three lines mentioned, he will submit a case to the Irish Law Officers or other counsel, asking their opinion on the several orders made regarding them, as well as upon the alleged illegality of the line now proposed to be constructed?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: The Orders in Council of the three lines specified in this Question as being analagous to the Ballaghaderreen line, prescribe that the weight shall not exceed eight tons on any pair of wheels, that the maximum speed where the line is more than 30 feet from the centre of the public road shall not exceed 25 miles an hour, and that in other cases it shall be less. Such limitations would be at variance with the stated requirements of the Midland Great Western Railway Company for the proposed Ballaghaderreen line. The lines in question differ from the heavy main lines in various respects, such as having steeper gradients, sharper curves, and lighter ballasting. I do not see any necessity for submitting a case to the Law Officers, as suggested by the hon. Member.

## THE BALLAGHADERREEN AND CASTLEREA RAILWAY.

MR. T. CURRAN (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a memorial adopted by the priests of the Sligo Deanery of the diocese of Achonry, protesting against the Treasury guaranteeing the proposed railway from Ballaghaderreen to Castlerea, on the ground that it would injuriously affect the interests of the Collooney and Claremorris Railway, for which the Treasury and the Grand Juries of Sligo and Mayo have given guarantees; and, whether he can state that the Treasury have finally and absolutely refused to entertain the proposal with regard to the projected line from Ballaghaderreen to Castlerea?

MR. J. MORLEY: My attention has been drawn to the representations referred to in the question. As regards the second paragraph, I stated in reply to a question addressed to me on Tuesday last that there are no funds at the disposal of the Treasury available for fresh guarantees, and that even if they had, the proposed project is not one to which they could legally contribute under that Act.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if, at the annual meeting of the Parish Council, the election of chairman and appointment of overseers, being the first business under Part II. Rule (3), of the First Schedule to The Local Government Act, 1894, the reading and signing of the Minutes of the last meeting are to be postponed until the chairman is elected and the overseers appointed; and, if the term of office of a vice chairman, elected at the first meeting of a parish council, expires at the annual meeting.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have no authority to determine the points raised in the question, but it appears to me that it is not necessary that at the annual meeting of a Parish Council the reading and signing of the Minutes of the last meeting should be postponed until the chairman of the Parish Council is elected and the overseers are appointed. I am advised that the term of office of the vice chairman would not expire at the annual meeting, unless he was only appointed up to that date.

## 1ST ESSEX VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.

MR. J. ROUND (Essex, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is able to state what steps have been taken to provide a drill shed for the 1st Essex Volunteer Artillery at Harwich?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This corps has till recently been allowed to use a shed the property of the Government; but that shed has been pulled down and replaced by another. The new shed is fully occupied by the garrison armament; and there is no room in it for the Volunteers. Arrangements have, however, been made, under which it is hoped that a shed will be ready for them soon after Whitsuntide, till which time the corps have made local arrangements for the use of a shed.

## THR OFFICE OF WOODS AND FORESTS.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Department of the Woods and Forests make a charge of £3 for copying documents which can be done for 13s. 10d. by a first-class law stationer; and, whether he will have the charges made by the Department reduced?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I understand that the documents to which my hon. Friend refers were not open to public inspection, and that copies were supplied to a private person purely as an act of favour. The charge in question covered, not merely copying the documents, but searching for and examining the Papers, and copying a plan, and I believe that for similar service an ordinary solicitor's fee would not be less than £5 5s.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that besides the £3 referred to, a further charge of 3s. 4d. was charged for searches?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I am not aware of that, but I do not think the charge is excessive.

### URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILS.

MR. R. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether the public can legally demand admittance to the general and special meetings of urban District Councils?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The public cannot legally demand admittance to the meetings of an urban District Council; but the Council may allow the public to be admitted to their meetings if they think proper to do so.

### BANK DEPOSITS.

*SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the estimated amount of deposits in the banks of the United Kingdom, including Post Office and trustee savings banks, and what proportion of these are on dormant accounts and have been unclaimed for ten years and upwards; whether he is aware that in the United States, the Dominion of Canada, and several British Colonies the banks are required to furnish periodical returns for publication of unclaimed balances, deposits, and dividends; and, whether there is any reason why the Queen's Remembrancer should not call for similar returns in the country for the benefit, in the first instance, of those directly interested and, failing them, of Her Majesty's Treasury?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Neither the Post Office nor the trustee savings banks can give the amount of dormant and unclaimed accounts. With regard to the suggestion that these unclaimed funds should be taken by the Treasury, both the Post Office and the trustee savings banks continue liable in respect of the deposits, without limit of time. We have no power to make any such demand upon private banks, nor do I think it would be advisable to do so.

*SIR J. LENG asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the Edinburgh Savings Bank had already taken steps to furnish the information suggested in the question?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I was not aware of that.

### UGANDA.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether there will be a special Vote for the payment to be made to the Imperial British East Africa Company, or what opportunity will be given the House to discuss the wisdom of making such payment without regard to the outstanding claims relating to the Company's operations in Uganda, which are under discussion with the Government of the French Republic?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, Sir, a Supplementary Vote will be taken upon that.

### INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND.

MR. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, seeing that the whole of the beer and spirit duties in Great Britain, or about £800,000, has been devoted to science, art, and technical instruction, a proportionate sum will be provided to promote industrial education in Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I must ask my hon. Friend to reserve his inquiry till he is acquainted with the money I have at my disposal.

### GOVERNMENT CLOTHING SUB-CONTRACTORS.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is aware that the members of the Government Workers' Branch of the Independent Tailors, Machinists, and Pressers Union, state that sweating is still being carried on by Government sub-contractors for clothing; whether he will receive a deputation of the members of the Union, who are ready to state specific cases; and, whether, if the statements of the deputation are satisfactory, he will cause inquiry to be made into the system which, it is alleged, does not carry out the Resolution of the House with regard to fair wages?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: My attention was called to this matter a short time ago, and I at once directed that full inquiry should be made by the Departments concerned. I understand that hitherto considerable difficulty has been found in obtaining definite information as to the particular firms and contracts referred to. For this reason I shall be very glad to receive a statement of specific cases; but I am afraid I cannot receive a deputation on the subject.

### THE CYPRUS TRIBUTE.

Mr. F. G. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) why the amount retained out of the Cyprus Tribute on account of the Sinking Fund of the 1855 Turkish Guaranteed Loan is not devoted to the payment of the bonds that have been drawn for repayment; (2) what is the total amount that has been retained from time to time for the purposes of the Sinking Fund; (3) and, where that sum now is?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: (1) This can only be done in concert with the Government of Turkey, and at present there are difficulties in the way of carrying out such an arrangement. To the second question the answer is £115,000; and to the third the answer is that the sum is invested in Consols.

Mr. R. PIERPOINT (Warrington) asked whether any negotiations were taking place as to the devotion of the money which was retained presumably for the Sinking Fund?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: We are very anxious to apply it at once to the Sinking Fund, but, as I mentioned, there are at the present moment difficulties in the way.

### MR. JUSTICE BEWLEY.

Mr. A. H. SMITH-BARRY (Hunts, S.) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he was correctly reported in *The Times* of the 3rd instant as having said that Mr. Justice Bewley described the Irish landlords as "the most heartless, thriftless, and indefensible landocracy in the world"; and, if so, whether he would be so good as to give the reference to the evidence which contains the passage referred to?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am very glad that the hon. Member has put that Question. My attention has been drawn to the misprint in the report of that remark of mine. I need not say that it must have been perfectly incredible to anybody that a man in Mr. Justice Bewley's position could have made any such remark. I think any Gentleman who heard me will be aware that I said, not Mr. Justice Bewley, but the late Mr. Justice Keogh.

### FINANCIAL RELATIONS OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) asked whether there was any chance of the Report of the Financial Relations Committee as between England and Ireland being presented in time for the discussion on the Budget?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I cannot be quite certain; but, from the knowledge I have of the circumstances, I should say not.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. GOSCHEN asked whether it was to be understood that the Naval Works Bill would be taken as the first Order tomorrow?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Yes.

Mr. J. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.), referring to the second and third items in the Orders of the Day—Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill and Local Government (Scotland) Bill respectively—asked whether the Crofters' Bill was to have precedence of the Scottish Local Government Bill?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Yes, Sir; the order of Scotch business has been put down in concert with the Secretary for Scotland, and I think the intention is to take them in the order in which they stand on the Paper.

Mr. HOZIER: And will it be so in the future?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I assume so.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked whether, if the Crofters' Bill was not taken to-night, it would be taken as the first Order to-morrow?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I have already said that the Naval Works Bill will be the first Order to-morrow.

Mr. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman take care that the Crofters' Bill is introduced before Easter?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I will do everything I can.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

Mr. Speaker, having called upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, left the Chair, which Mr. Mellor thereupon took as Deputy Speaker.

### INTOXICATING LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL CONTROL) BILL.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER, who was received with cheers, said: In asking the leave of the House to introduce a Bill to establish local control over the traffic in intoxicating liquor I shall not have to occupy the attention of the House very long with preliminary observations. The subject is familiar to the House, and has been so for a great many years, and I had the opportunity when on a former occasion I introduced a Bill which, in respect of its general principles, was similar to, I might almost say identical with, this Bill, to explain at length the reasons upon which that Bill was founded. This Bill which we now propose to introduce is, with certain alterations, substantially the same Bill. I need not argue, I think, in this House to-day as to the necessity of a Bill of some description relating to the liquor question. I need not evoke any of the resources of rhetoric to show the magnitude of the evils which exist or the necessity of endeavouring to cope with those evils. There is no man, I believe, on either side of the House, who will dispute the infinite mischiefs of excessive drink or deny that such mischiefs do exist in our midst. There are, I know, great differences of opinion as regards the remedy which ought to be applied to those evils, but not as to the evils themselves. I will venture to affirm, and I think I shall not be contradicted, that there is no social question comparable in importance with that of the evils due to excessive drinking in this country. It is often said, and said with much truth, that we ought to apply ourselves to the remedy of social evils. Is there any man here who will say that one of the greatest causes of poverty in this country is not the excessive indulgence in drink? The question occupies the mind of the wage-paying and wage-earning classes. Is there anything which operates so prejudicially upon both classes as the evils arising from drink? If you ask any man who knows anything about crime, if you ask the Judges, successive Home Secretaries, or the magistrates, they will tell you with unanimous voice that one of the principal causes, if not the principal cause, of crime in this country is excessive drink. Is there anything that can be so destructive of the happiness of the home, which I think we ought all of us to regard, as this widespread and desolating evil? What is the actual condition of the drink traffic? It is to a great degree the outcome of our present system. It is the creation of our law, and if it is to be reformed it must be reformed by legislation, and the first question I will ask the House to consider is—What are to be the fundamental principles upon which that legislation ought to be based? What is to be the motive power which we are to invoke in order to deal with such a gigantic mischief as this? Our success or failure in such an attempt must depend upon our rightly or upon our wrongly choosing the principles upon which we shall proceed. Our present system depends upon the licensing discretion of the magistrates. Formerly, no doubt, it also depended a good deal with the Excise, upon whom a large part of the responsibility for the existing system must rest; but for the last twenty-five years almost the whole of the power of licensing has been exercised by the magistrates. I am not prepared, and I have never been disposed, to pass a censure upon the magistrates, for I know the difficulties with which they have to deal. There is one feature, however, in our licensing system which, I think, cannot be too severely condemned, and that is the practice of allowing appeals to quarter sessions from the decisions of the local authority. There are cases—so astonishing that I can only call them outrageous—in which men of the greatest local knowledge and unquestioned judgment have withdrawn licences from houses which they thought either unnecessary or ill-conducted, and in which their decisions have been reversed on an appeal to magistrates knowing nothing about the locality. No doubt, however, the magistrates have often to a great degree been powerless to act otherwise, and would have gladly been relieved of their responsibilities. I remember an occasion when the magistrates of Kent came in a body to me and asked me to do something to put down the excess of public-houses in their county. I said :—

> "It is atonishing that you should come to me, because you are the persons who have licensed these houses and who could discontinue doing so."

They replied that such action on their part would be very unpopular, and I said :—

> "Then what you desire is that I should accept the unpopularity?"

I have lately been put in possession of an example, no doubt an extreme example, which shows what may happen and what does happen under the present licensing system. I will not name the locality in order not to raise any invidious discussion respecting it, but I have every reason to believe that the case is authentic. In one of your great towns there is a street containing 27 houses and having a length of 191 yards, and this is the way in which the houses are used :—No. 1 is a public house, No. 6 a public house, No. 7 a beerhouse, No. 8 a public house, No. 9 a public house, No. 10 a public house, No. 11 a post office, No. 12 a public house, No. 13 a public house, No. 14 a wine and spirit store, No. 16 a public house, No. 18 a public house, No. 20 a public house, No. 21 a public house, No. 23 a public house, and No. 24 a public house. Thus, out of 27 structures 15 are public houses. That is the number of houses that the magistrates have licensed, and which, year by year, in spite of the remonstrance of some of the inhabitants of this street, they think themselves bound to continue to license. I do not think anybody can consider that a satisfactory state of things. We are deeply convinced that no really efficient and adequate reforming of the licensing system can be applied by mere improvement in the present licensing system. The magistrates are not strong enough, have not shown themselves strong enough, to deal with the powerful interests and the deep-rooted prejudices by which this system is impregnably surrounded. We must, I believe, invoke a much more powerful and effectual agency, and, if I might be permitted without egotism to say what I have got to say in the same words which I employed in 1893, I would describe the agency upon which we rely thus :—

*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

> "If you are to strike an effective blow at a great national evil, you must appeal to the conscience and the voice of the people; you must appeal to that great democratic principle which evokes the vital energy of the popular voice and of the popular conscience. You cannot treat interests so vast as these—you cannot cope with evils so deeply rooted—by leaving them to the discretion of any selected class, or of any delegated body. If you hope to form habits of moral obligation, you must make your appeal direct to the conscience of the people themselves. If the people are to be reformed, they must be the authors of their own reformation."

That is the principle upon which this Bill is founded, and that is the principle upon which we founded the Bill of 1893. It is the principle of local option. The official adhesion to that principle of the Party which sits on this side of the House was declared in 1883. It was my duty, as it was my pleasure, upon that occasion, in the name of the Government of that day, to declare that we believe that the reform of these evils was to be found in the principle of local option, and I think I am right in saying—although I know there are differences of opinion upon the subject—that it is upon that principle of local option that the convictions of the great majority of the temperance party in this country are concentrated. In the early stages of this discussion there was no doubt a disposition to think that it might be wise, instead of taking the direct vote of the people, to confide the settlement of the question to representative bodies like the present County Councils and Town Councils. I admit that I was formerly of that opinion myself; but since the discussions that have taken place upon the subject of local government, since the great extension of local government by the measures establishing County Councils and Parish Councils, I think the general feeling is that it might have an injurious influence upon the action of those Councils if they were mixed up with the liquor question.

Therefore, I do not believe that those who are in favour of Local Option would now pronounce in favour of giving that option to be determined by those local authorities. I venture to say, though sometimes one would hardly think it, that this is not a Party question. Certainly, the advocacy of some reform in the liquor traffic in this country has not been confined to Members who sit on this side of the House. There have been many Bills promoted by Gentlemen on the other side of the House. There was one very remarkable Bill promoted by a Member whose absence from this House we all regret, the late Lord Randolph Churchill. He took immense pains with the Bill he introduced upon that subject. It was in part a Licensing Bill and in part a Local Option Bill, and I will ask leave to refer to what Lord Randolph Churchill said on the subject of Local Option. He said—

> "The main principle of the Bill is popular control of the issue of licences. It is alleged that you cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament. You cannot, it is true, but I tell you what you can do; you can give the people by Act of Parliament the power to make themselves sober."

That is the fundamental principle of Local Option. He went on—

> "There should be brought into operation that which is called the Direct Veto—that is to say that, if in a certain parish two-thirds of the ratepayers voted for the prohibition of the granting of licences, the votes should operate against the granting of all retail licences. On the face of it, it is not unfair that, where you find a large and preponderating majority in a restricted area who desire to live under conditions which in their belief conduce to order and morality, it is hard on such a majority that a comparatively small minority should be able to prevent them having their way. What makes it especially hard in this case is that the power which you refuse to entrust, or which you may possibly refuse to entrust, to so large and preponderating a majority is a power which under the law of the land is actually enjoyed by the owners of property."

That Bill and that statement were received with no small amount of favour by a former Government, and, therefore, I think I am entitled to say that this principle of Local Option is not one which belongs to one side of the House, but has been received with great favour by both parties in the State. The last point to which Lord Randolph Churchill referred is, I think, a very important point. He says that it is very hard on the community that they should not enjoy the same power which any particular landlord who may possess the soil on which that community lives, possesses and exercises according to his own discretion. Which of us in this House would like to have a public-house next door to us? Which of us would like to live in such a street as that I have described? I want to know if the people who live in Grosvenor Square or Belgrave Square are protected against nuisances of this description by their landlords, who receive in consequence a higher rent, why are people who live in humbler quarters and under meaner conditions, not to have the same means of protecting themselves? I saw the other day in the law reports in a newspaper an account of an action for an injunction brought by the Duke of Devonshire against one of his tenants at Eastbourne upon a covenant not to use the premises as a public-house or beershop, or for carrying on of any offensive trade or business whatever. There a public-house or beershop is included in offensive businesses with trades in the covenant. [No, no.] Well, I am reading the words. This covenant is in force against a person who sets up an hotel. Why is it there? It is in order to give protection to the people who are the lessees from that which they would resent—that is to say, a multiplication of drink shops in their midst and for the regulation of the trade. Then, I ask, and I have never heard a moderate answer to the question, why the community, as a community, are not to have the same power of veto on the traffic as that which the proprietor of the soil on which the community lives exercises? I confess I should like to hear an answer to that question. I have said that the majority, I believe the great majority, of the temperance party in this country has been rallied to the principle of Local Option. I know there are advocates, and distinguished advocates, of a different system. I am not now going to enter upon the discussion of what is called the Scandinavian system that is in force in Sweden and Norway. I shall be prepared, if the discussion is raised in the course of this Bill, to deal with that question, and to give the reasons which seem to me sufficient for not adopting that as the principle on which we should proceed. But with reference to what is called the Scandinavian system, it seems to me that the great reforms made in those countries were not made under that system, which is called the Bolag in Sweden and the Samlag in Norway, but were made by the application of the simple principle of Local Option in a great part of the rural districts. It was only in the towns that the Gothenburg system was applied, and it was by Local Option in Sweden that the great reduction of the evil was in the first instance accomplished. It is a very remarkable thing that within the last six months in Norway, which is always taken as being the pattern of the system, what is called the Gothenburg plan has been subordinated to Local Option, and an Act has been passed late in last year (it will be found in Foreign Office papers relating to Norway), of which I will venture to read one clause—

> "Before the recognition of a plan (scheme) of a Samlag takes place, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, it shall be decided by a general vote, in which men and women over 25 years of age have a right to take part, whether the establishment or the continued working of a Samlag, for the sale and retail of spirits, shall be permitted within the limits of a town.

Therefore, after an experience of the system for many years, they have found the necessity of putting over it a direct veto of the people as to whether a Samlag shall be allowed to continue at all. That is very remarkable testimony as bearing upon the operation of the Gothenburg system. The clause goes on—

> "A Samlag cannot be established or obtain a renewed recognition of its established plan (scheme) if the majority of those entitled to vote are against it."

So that by a simple majority on a direct vote the establishment of a Samlag can be prevented.

> "If a Samlag is by such a vote abolished, a majority of those qualified to vote in the matter is required in order that the Samlag shall be reopened. These arrangements are good for five years,"

and so forth. I think that is a very remarkable piece of experience with reference to the discussion of what is called the Gothenburg system. It is shown by it that Local Option, in the sentiments and experience of the Temperance Party, has been regarded as the supreme and governing principle on this question. Now, Sir, the Bill I introduced in 1893, on behalf of the Government, was described, and properly described, as a Local Veto Bill. This Bill is also a Local Veto Bill, and the provisions for a popular veto in favour of total prohibition remain the same in their material particulars; but this Bill is something more than a Local Veto Bill, and it may properly be described as a Local Option Bill, because it offers other options besides that of total prohibition. I have always been aware of the strong opinion which existed on this subject. I have always known and recognised the force of the desire, that people who do not wish for total prohibition, have, that there should be also a power for the reduction of the inordinate number of licences. The evil of the multiplication of licences is this, that the number of these houses is such that they cannot possibly live except by having recourse to practices which everybody will condemn. That is one great evil of the multiplication of these licences. I ask, referring again to the example of the street I quoted, do you believe that if there were a vote given by the people of that district, that street would remain in the condition it is in at the present time? I have never myself been averse to the principle of giving the veto over the multiplication and restriction of licences as well as over prohibition. I have been deterred more by the practical difficulties of that question. I desire that the subject should be made as simple as it is possible to make it, and although I have seen many of these Temperance Bills, of which there are so many before the House, and which have professed to deal with this question of the limitation of licences, I have never seen one of them which has grappled with the real practical difficulties of the case, though most of them say that there shall be a vote taken for a specified number of public-houses. What specified number? And how is it to be determined? They generally take for each recognition one-tenth of the inhabitants. It is perfectly obvious that if you take a tenth of the number you might have ten distinct and different specifications, and so you would inextricably confuse the issue, and you would make it impossible to take a poll. We will say there are 100 public-houses. Well, the people who want the least reduction would vote that there should be 99; the people who want the most reduction would propose that you should have one, and between those two you might have 10, 20, 40, or 50. If you go to the poll with 10 of these proposals you would so confuse the issue, and so distract the voting, that you would never arrive at any reasonable or practical result. That is the first difficulty, and none of these Bills attempted anything practical to solve it. I have myself spent many hours in trying to solve that question. There is another difficulty. Who is to determine, where you have resolved to diminish the number, upon the selection? There are two women grinding at one mill, the one is taken and the other left; but which is to be taken, and which is to be left, is a subject with which these Bills have never attempted to deal. When we have to come to a practical, working Bill we must attempt some solution of these difficulties, and we have done our best to meet them, being desirous to introduce the principle of limitation as well as the principle of prohibition. Without any further preliminary observations, I will now endeavour to explain the Bill that we ask leave to introduce. The Bill will commence in this way. The poll will be taken by the local authority, who will be the town council or parish council, or whatever may be the local authority in the particular district. It will have the responsibility of taking the poll, and will have nothing to do, of course, with the vote. The requisition will be one to be made by not less than one-tenth of the parochial electors. We have taken the parochial electors from the Act of 1893 because it is the largest constituency we can take. The House will remember that this is more extended than the municipal franchise that we had before, because it would include the service vote, and the lodgers, and so forth. At all events, we have taken the largest franchise which now exists, and the parochial electors will be the constituents. The areas will be in the boroughs, the wards, and, in the rural districts, the parish or the wards of the parish. In London it will be the sanitary district or ward within the meaning of the Public Health (London) Act, 1891. I have said before, and I should like again to insist upon it, that for a purpose of this kind small areas are much better than large, because they give you more completely the real opinion of the people dealt with. If you took a large area, such as a county, you might be applying to one part of the county a system which another part did not desire to have. The smaller your area is, the more likely you are to really have the support of the population for the policy which is adopted. That is shown in a book by Mr. Fanshawe which everybody interested in this subject either has read or ought to read—a book which we owe to the public spirit and liberality of the hon. Member for Carmarthenshire, who at great trouble has collected certainly the most reliable and useful information which has ever been published, I think, upon the Temperance question, and for which I desire to render him my personal thanks. We are of opinion that a small area for these purposes is much more likely to be effectual than a large area, and much more certain, when taken, to represent the true opinion of the population. On this subject there is to be found important evidence in Mr. Fanshawe's book. He says—

> "The Scott Act, which had so successful a career in Ontario, was local option by counties and cities; and its failure has by some been in part attributed to the too great extent of the area of adoption. The older Dunkin Act, which can be adopted by townships, has in the long run shown greater vitality than the Scott Act, and is now in force in a considerable portion of the province of Quebec. In Michigan and Missouri States, where local option, after attracting much attention a few years ago, does not exhibit an encouraging aspect at the present time, the area of adoption is the county. On the other hand, Massachusetts, in which the principle shows far more vigour than in any other State in the north, applies it to every city and township, and thus comprises three hundred and fifty independent divisions in a territory about as large as Yorkshire and Lancashire."

There is a provision in the Bill by which, in the case of very small parishes and wards, they may be grouped. Now I come to the prohibitory resolution, for which the provisions are much the same as in the last Bill. The prohibitory resolution may be carried by a majority of two-thirds of the electors voting. The resolution will come into force at the date of the general annual licensing meeting which occurs next after the expiration of three years from the commencement of the Act—*i.e.* January 1—or the expiration of one year from the date of the poll, whichever is latest. That will give a period of four years—more than three years, and I think nearly four years. It was necessary to make that provision in case the poll were taken at the latest possible date, and there should be at the expiration of the three years no notice to the occupier at all. While the prohibitory resolution is in force no ordinary licence shall be granted. I would ask the attention of the House to the words "ordinary licence," because that is a governing point in the Bill. The ordinary licence means all licences within the meaning of the Licensing Act, 1872, with the exception of certain restricted licences, which I shall presently refer to. The ordinary licence in point of fact is the justices' licence covering all the cases which require a justices' licence. I use the words "ordinary licence" in that sense as distinguished from the retail trade which is carried on by wholesale dealers who do not require a Justice's licence, and as distinguished from the restricted licence to which I will presently come.

Mr. COSMO BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon): Will that include grocers' licences?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Certainly, you may be quite sure the Bill will include grocers' licences. While the prohibitory resolution is in force no ordinary licence shall be granted within the area, and I have given the definition of what an ordinary licence is. When such a poll has been taken no further poll shall be taken for three years, whether the resolution has been carried or rejected. The object of that is, that the community shall not be constantly disturbed by the raising of this question without an interval of experience. But after the three years a poll may be taken, if a prohibitory resolution is in force, for repealing it. The majority in the Bill for repealing it is to be a simple majority. That differs from the Act of 1893, by which a two-thirds majority was required to repeal the prohibitory resolution. But, upon reflection, it seemed to us that when you impose the prohibition only by a large majority, and that large majority has not only ceased to exist, but has been converted into a minority, you would not be justified in maintaining that prohibition. Therefore I think this is an equitable provision, and the only one consistent with the principle of a two-thirds majority. If the resolution is rejected at the first poll, of course, at the expiration of three years, a further resolution may be proposed. So much for the prohibitory resolution, which, with the exception of the point I have just referred to, is practically the same as in the Bill of 1893. Now I come to that which is really the only substantially new feature of this Bill; and that is, the limiting resolution. A requisition may be presented for the reduction of the number of licences, and this limitation and reduction we propose shall be carried by a simple majority, and not by a majority of two-thirds. When a limiting resolution is in force ordinary licences shall not be granted within the area to a number in excess of three-fourths of the number existing at the date of the poll. Owing to the impossibility of allowing an infinite number of requisitions for an infinite number of specified limitations, we thought that the only practical way of dealing with it was to say, "If you vote for limitation you vote for a diminution of the number by one-fourth." Now, if that process is successful and recommends itself to the judgment of the community, at the expiration of three years there may be a further limitation of another fourth, and in that way you will make provision for a gradual reduction, by steps of one-fourth, in the existing number of licences. Of course, there will be difficulties, which, no doubt, the ingenious minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite will fix upon, especially when they get below the number four. Our principle is, that a vote for limitation means a vote for a reduction substantially in round numbers by one-fourth of the licences that exist. This is a rough and ready method of dealing with the thing. But, after the most careful consideration we can give to it, it seems to us to be the only practical method of dealing with limitations. Now there will necessarily be a difficulty, when you have to reduce licences by one-fourth, to determine what is the fourth which is to be reduced. Where there has been a vote for a limiting Resolution we take it that there is an express desire on the part of the community to be relieved to a great extent of the number of licensed houses, and we propose that in such a case the magistrates shall not be face to face with a number of existing interests—as they now regard themselves as being, though in law they are not—but that they shall deal with all the licences in that district as new licences—as if they were dealing with a district in which there were no licences at all. Then, to the extent they think fit—not exceeding three-fourths of the previously existing number—they shall give licences within that district just as they would in a new district altogether, and the law applicable to this case would be the law, not of the renewal of licences, but the law of new licences altogether. That will give to the magistrates a clean sheet in the matter. But, of course, this only applies where a limiting resolution has been carried. If I had been dealing with a Licensing Bill and not a Local Option Bill, I do not know that I should not have been disposed to recommend that that should be the case in all districts. But, as I am dealing only with the question of local control, I propose that, where a limiting Resolution has been passed, the discretion of the magistrates shall be absolute in all cases, and they shall deal with that district as a *tabula rasa*, and give licences within it not exceeding the limit of three-fourths as they think the district requires them. This is the best solution we have been able to devise for this difficult question.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester): May I ask whether the magistrates under that provision would be obliged to give three-fourths or any number less?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: The words of the Act are, "not exceeding three-fourths." I will read the actual words:—

> "While a limiting Resolution is in force in any area, ordinary licences shall not be granted in that area to a number in excess of three-fourths of the number existing at the date of the poll, without prejudice to the discretion of licensing justices to grant a less number of licences than the said three-fourths. And for the purpose of carrying this Resolution into effect, the granting of ordinary licences at the general annual licensing meeting, at which such Resolution comes into force, whether in respect of premises previously licensed or not, shall be subject to the law relating to the granting of new licences."

Mr. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex): Is that Resolution to be by a special or simple majority?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: By a simple majority.

The MARQUESS of CARMARTHEN (Camberwell, Brixton): How long will it be before it comes into force?

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: It will be subject to the same regulations as prohibitory licences. I was going to add that the machinery for taking the poll will be the same in the case of a limiting as in that of a prohibitory Resolution. A poll may be taken on a prohibitory or limiting Resolution, or upon both. There may be a section of the community who wish for prohibition, or a section who wish for limitation. Each may present its requisition. The poll will be taken upon both these issues, and we propose that any elector may vote for or against both. You can quite conceive that a man who desires prohibition may desire, if he fails, to have limitation, which would probably be carried. There is no reason why a man who desires prohibition should not vote also for limitation, and therefore a requisition may be presented both for prohibition and limitation, or only for prohibition or only for limitation, if only one should be desired by the people who look for this reform. I wish to make it clear—because in many Bills before the House it is obligatory to put all these questions—that we leave it to the community upon the requisition to put one or both. If there is only a prohibitory Resolution there will be a simple ballot-paper vote for prohibition, and if both prohibition and limitation are desired there will be a ballot paper with "Are you in favour of total prohibition?" upon it, and then opposite "Yes" or "No." Upon the same ballot paper would also be, "If you are not in favour of prohibition, are you in favour of limitation?" So much for the taking of the vote. Where both are proposed, the votes on the prohibitory Resolution will be counted first, and if that Resolution is carried the votes on the limiting Resolution will not be counted. Now that describes the situation where no previous Resolution has been enforced. That is the way the thing stands when you begin. But where a prohibitory Resolution is in force, after a lapse of three years a Resolution may be proposed to repeal it. It will be impossible then to propose a limiting Resolution for this reason—that there is nothing to limit. The licences have all gone during the three years, and therefore the discretion must remain absolute with the magistrates after that repeal until a limiting Resolution may be proposed. But where a limiting Resolution is in force and not a prohibitory Resolution, there may be, at the expiration of the term of three years, three alternatives proposed. A limiting Resolution may be in force, but the community may desire to substitute for it prohibition, or they may desire, not prohibition, but further limitation beyond one-fourth, or they may be dissatisfied with the operation of the limiting Resolution and vote for its repeal altogether. That might be done after experience of the limiting Resolution. The votes would be counted in the order I have stated, and when one is found to be carried the subsequent votes will not be counted Now I think what I have said sufficiently accurately describes what we propose with reference to local option upon prohibitory and limiting Resolutions. There are other provisions in the Bill which prohibit retail sale while a prohibitory Resolution is in force by other dealers in liquors not under justices' licences—I mean wine dealers and others who have the power of selling by retail without a justice's licence at all. Of course in a prohibitory district such retail sale would be forbidden altogether, and where a limiting Resolution is in force such dealers will be called upon to take out a justice's licence for retail dealing, which will be under the same conditions as other ordinary licences. Occasional licences will be subject to the same conditions as restricted licences, and there are supplementary provisions in the Bill as to corrupt and illegal practices. Now I come to one point which is important, and that is what we called in a former Bill, I think, "exemptions" from the operations of these prohibitory and limiting votes, and which we have called restricted licences. I will ask leave on this point to do what I admit is a bad practice, viz. to quote myself, but I do it to show we are guided by the same principle that we acted on before. I should like to read the words I used in 1893:—

> "This is a Bill which is not conceived in any spirit of narrow fanaticism. We do not desire or pretend to put down the use and consumption of liquor by persons in their own houses, or, if they have no houses of their own, in the places where they reside or where they take their meals. I believe, if we were to attempt anything of that kind, we should be met with a violent resistance, and probably a violent reaction, in this country, and nothing can be more injurious to the cause of temperance. This Bill is directed against the bar of the gin palace and the tap-room of the public house and the beershop. It is not intended to prevent the consumption of liquor by such people as desire or require it, whether travelling on the railway, or where they are in hotels and inns for public accommodation, or at eating-houses, where people who have no homes of their own take their ordinary meals. These restrictions are not directed to the ordinary habits of people in the places where they reside or the places where they take their meals; they are directed against what I may describe as 'tippling.'"

It is upon that principle we introduced the exemptions which were in the Bill of 1893, and upon which are founded what are called in this Bill the restricted licences. I here apply to a class of house the licensing of which is also under the justices, but which we do not propose to place under the operation of these Resolutions of prohibition or limitation; and, in order to prevent any misconception, I had better read the words of the Bill:—

> "Where a prohibiting or limiting Resolution is in force, and it is shown to the satisfaction of the licensing justices that any premises whether previously licensed or not, are constructed, fitted and intended to be used in good faith exclusively for the purposes of an hotel, eating-house, or railway refreshment-room, as herein defined, or any of them, and not to be so constructed and fitted as to be suitable for the retail sale of intoxicating liquors otherwise than for such purposes"—that is, for the purpose of meals and entertaining people residing in an hotel—"the licensing justices may, in their discretion, grant in respect of such premises a license expressed to be restricted as a licence for an hotel, eating-house, or railway refreshment-room or any of them, and such licence is in this Act referred to as a restricted licence."

Then there is a description of this class of houses to which these licences are to be reserved, subject, of course, to the discretion of the magistrates as to their number and the necessities of the district :—

> "In this section the expression hotel includes an inn, and the purpose of an hotel or inn is the accommodation of travellers and of persons lodging therein ; the purpose of an eating-house is the supply of meals to persons on the premises ; and the purpose of a railway refreshment-room is the supplying of refreshments at railway stations to persons who arrive or depart by the railway, and who are not travelling for the purpose of obtaining intoxicating liquors."

[*Laughter.*] It is really no laughing matter ; there is a good deal of it ; and it is a thing with which it is necessary to deal. These licences are to be restricted by any such conditions as the magistrates may see fit to impose on them, and the justices are required each year, when these licences are renewed, specially to examine whether these conditions have been complied with. These are practically, with some differences of detail, the exemptions which we dealt with in the Bill of 1893. There is another provision with reference to these restricted licences which I ought to explain to the House. I will suppose that, in a district where the limiting Resolution is in force, the limitation has left six ordinary licences to be granted. It may be a small country town, with one or more inns ; that inn, under the provision, will have a restricted licence ; but, if there are to be six of the ordinary licences, no house probably will be fitter to be in charge, if I may use that phrase, of such a licence than that inn. Therefore it would be enabled to have an ordinary licence in addition to the restricted licence. There is one other question which is very much disputed, and that is the question of Sunday closing. I know there is a very strong opinion on the part of a great number of the temperance party that Sunday closing ought to be made, not a matter of local option, but one of Imperial legislation, as it has been in Scotland, and as it has been in Wales. I will not go at length into that argument now; I did so in 1893. The Government believed it would be impossible in this country to enforce a universal Sunday Closing Bill, and in the state of opinion in England it would be most unwise, in the interests of temperance itself, to attempt to pass such a Bill. I believe that in many parts of the country such a measure would be strongly and earnestly resisted. Certainly nobody would think at present of attempting to carry out Sunday closing in London, and there are many other parts of the country where you could not do it with the accord and support of the public. The very principle on which we are proceeding is that restriction of this character must carry with it the opinions of the majority of the people, and unless you are satisfied, as you have reason to be satisfied in Scotland and Wales, that the large majority are in favour of compulsory Sunday closing, in my opinion you could not safely attempt it. But that is no reason why you should not have Sunday closing in Cornwall and other parts of the country where you would have the support of a majority of the people. In Cornwall you would have Sunday closing almost universally adopted by Local Option. Therefore we have inserted the provision which we introduced in 1893, that Sunday closing shall be applied by a vote to be taken by a simple majority, and we distinguish between Sunday closing and all other closing by enacting that a Sunday closing Resolution shall come into operation at the end of the current licences, and not be deferred for three years as in the case of the other Resolutions, and no further Resolution upon the subject can be put forward for three years.

MR. L. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) : For the same area ?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER : For the same area. I come now to the last and, perhaps, the most disputed point of all—the question of compensation. I gave reasons on a former occasion why compensation should not be applied to the case of terminable licences. It had been urged that long use and frequent renewal gave a sort of permanent title to compensation in these cases. There is one thing I think absolutely certain, and Gentlemen sitting upon the Benches opposite will not deny it, that if you are to deal with this Temperance Question upon the footing of money compensation you will not be able to deal with it at all. Gentlemen opposite tried that and they found such resistance, such condemnation of any such principle, that they were obliged to abandon the attempt to adopt it. Even their own supporters would not have it, and the country would not accept it; and yet whenever we have proposed to deal with the matter in a different way, not by money compensation, but by what we call time compensation for a number of years, we are met with the cry of robbery, plunder, and confiscation. We are so used to that, that we have ceased to suffer from the imputation. There is no great reform that has been passed in this country during the last 50 years against which the same cry has not been raised. When we are told that these proposals are of the nature of robbery, plunder, and confiscation, I should like to refer to the examples of some other nations and States who may, perhaps, be deemed to be more honest than ourselves. Let us see what has been the course pursued with regard to compensation in other countries. I refer again to Mr. Fanshawe's book on temperance experience in America. There is no country in which experiments in temperance reform have been attempted so universally; there is hardly any State in the United States in which temperance reform has not been tried in one shape or another. This is what Mr. Fanshawe says:—

"In America reductions in the number of licences have sometimes been carried out in a very sweeping way. Boston" (which has not been considered a robbing, plundering, and confiscating part of the Union) "made a reduction in one year from 1,780 to 780; Philadelphia, in one year, from 5,770 to 1,740; Minneapolis, in three or four years, from 535 to 230, notwithstanding a rapid growth of population, and all without a dollar of compensation."

So there are robbers and confiscators elsewhere than in England. Mr. Fanshawe further says:—

"The Compensation Question received little attention—indeed, can hardly be said to have any political existence, so far as the saloon keepers are concerned. Such advocacy as is forthcoming in favour of any such claim is little more than academic, and renewals of licences have been refused in the most wholesale way without the question of compensation being seriously raised. The only real controversy which has arisen in connection with this question was upon the right of brewers and distillers to be compensated for loss of capital on the passing of a law prohibiting the manufacture of liquor, and the final decision was against the claim."

That is the view taken in the United States on the subject of compensation. Well, then, I will come to Scandinavia, and this is what Mr. Wilson, in his book on "Local Option in Norway," says:—

"Finally, public opinion decided that there could exist no vested right in a trade, the right to exercise which was dependent on the possession of a licence granted only for a term without any obligation to renew longer than public interests permitted, and that there could be no question of compensation for disturbance in exercising a trade, the right to exercise which had expired by the effluxion of the term for which the licence was granted."

He stated his case as if it were a legal case, and he finishes by saying:—

"Judgment was accordingly given for the defendant; the societies won the day, and the publicans were ousted from the licences without a farthing of compensation for the refusal to renew their licences."

Those were the robbers and confiscators of the pattern country of Norway, and that is their view of this question. Then I come to the immaculate Gothenburg, and the same principle still applies. This is what Mr. Whyte says:—

"What Mr. Larsson and I told you as to the non-compensation to publicans for the loss of their licences is perfectly correct, since the company has never paid a penny of compensation to publicans or others, beyond two licences held for life or by burghership which the company acquired by private arrangements."

There were certain non-renewable licences which were life licences—only a very small number—which were dealt with by agreement. As regards the great body of licences, there was no compensation given whatever. Mr. Whyte goes on:—

"The law of Norway did not require that any notice whatever should be given to licence-holders. At the end of the period for which the licences were granted, all right and title to them came to an end. The licences were not granted (as is the case in England) for one year and no longer, but for periods of from one year up to five years, which latter was the *maximum* number for which they could be granted."

That is the manner in which the three countries in which temperance reform has been most largely and effectually dealt with have regarded the question of compensation for terminable licences; and, therefore, I commend it to those who use the kind of violent language which is sometimes employed on this subject. But now take our own country. What have we done? First of all there is Sunday closing. That, of course, was an infringement *pro tanto* of the right of property of the man who had got, and always had until Sunday closing was initiated, the right to trade for seven days. You said he was only to trade for six days. That may be considered as decidedly an invasion of the right of his property, but you gave no compensation in that case. But there is another very remarkable case. There are what are called beerhouses that existed before 1869. They were under a special protection. They had a right of renewal if they fulfilled four separate conditions; but what happened to those houses as regards those licences? A Bill was introduced into this House by Mr. Ritchie, in the Government of 1880 and 1882, when the whole of that protection was taken away from those beerhouses as regards sale off the premises. They were subjected to the absolute discretion of the magistrates, and their rights of conditional renewal, which before were under protection, were taken away, and not a farthing of compensation was given. ["No, No."] I will not go into an argument about that, but I will satisfy the hon. Gentlemen who dispute that that I am right. They will find that under the Act of 1880 and the Act of 1882 the off-licence of those beerhouses were subjected to the absolute discretion of the magistrates.

MR. H. C. O. BONSOR (Wimbledon): Off-licences and beerhouses are two absolutely different things. The off-licences were the old Excise licences: the beerhouses were always under the magistrates.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: My hon. Friend is entirely mistaken. I am speaking of off-beerhouses. I am not speaking of off-licences. There are beerhouses that are licensed to sell off the premises, and there are those that are licensed to sell on the premises. And the Acts of 1880 and 1882 took away the protection which was given to the beerhouses licensed to sell off the premises under the Act of 1869, and took it away without compensation. I will refer my hon. Friend to the Act of 1869, Section 8, which was the Act that gave the protection, and then I will refer him to the Acts of 1880 and 1882, which took away the protection. The effect was that, whereas those houses could not be refused a licence except on those conditions, those two Acts took away the protection and gave the magistrates absolute discretion to refuse the licence, and that was done without any compensation whatever. There are, then, these two examples — there is that of Sunday closing and there is this example, that the beerhouse off-licences are under the absolute discretion of the magistrates. I come now to the principle which everyone who is familiar with this subject knows very well, and which is known by the name of the case of Sharp and Wakefield, which laid down that the magistrates had beyond question a legal power to refuse the renewal of all licences, and they have exercised that power, and had exercised it for years. Every year there was made to this House a Return—I think I moved for it first—of the refusal of licences by magistrates which showed the grounds upon which the licences have been refused. And every year a very large number of licences were refused upon no other ground except that in the case of Sharp and Wakefield, which was that the house is not wanted. I exclude all the cases where other grounds were alleged, such as unfitness of the premises or misconduct of the tenant. All those are excluded, and if anybody will take the trouble, as I have, of analysing those Returns, he will find that in the year 1890–91 there are 87 of such cases; in 1892, 44; and in 1893 I think there were 58 in which no reason was alleged except that they were superfluous and not wanted, and no compensation was given. The moral of all this is that the Justices have taken away these licences, or, rather, they have not taken them away, but they have refused to renew them, as they were lawfully entitled to do, and they have done it without compensation. The compensation, as I have said, which we offer, and the only compensation which I think can be offered, is that which I have called a time compensation. There will be notice, upon the passing of a Bill like this, to the publican that a Resolution either of prohibition or of limitation may be brought into operation, and it cannot happen that a man will be turned out without any notice at all. He will have notice, and there will be time in which he will be able to arrange his affairs. I am afraid I have taken up the time of the House too long already, but there is one other point to which I wish to refer, and that is with reference to the application of this Bill to Ireland. This Bill has not been applied to Ireland because we contemplate the time when Ireland will deal with this question herself. [*Opposition laughter.*] Oh, yes, I know that hon. Gentlemen opposite are as little disposed to allow Ireland to deal with this question of temperance herself as with anything else, but that, at all events, is our opinion, and if Ireland prefers that we should deal with it we must hear that from Ireland herself. That is the reason, and that is the only reason, why this Bill does not apply to Ireland. I will now relieve the House from any further detail. I have endeavoured in the statement I have made to import into this discussion as little of passion and of prejudice and of exaggeration as is possible. I am painfully conscious of the great difficulties surrounding this momentous question and the powerful interests which are arrayed against any attempt to deal with it. It offers, no doubt, a very tempting implement of Party warfare; but the support or the defeat of this measure, or of any measure like it, does not depend upon Party organisation; nor will it, in the last result, be determined by Party spirit. The convictions to which such a measure appeals lie deep in the consciences of tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of all sorts and conditions of men and of women, who take but little interest in Party strife, but who, from the bottom of their hearts, believe that of all social questions this is the greatest, who passionately hold that of all political duties—I mean duties to the body politic in the highest sense of the word—the first and the foremost is to grapple with this corroding mischief which is eating into the core and vitals of the people. It is to you they look—and they have the right to look—for some hope, some light, some cure for this the darkest stain which disfigures your national life. They will not ask whether you are Liberals or Tories, Nationalists or Unionists; they will ask who amongst you, as representatives of this people, are willing to co-operate in so great a cause. It is my fervent hope, as it is my confident belief, that this Parliament will not close without a sincere and strenuous effort to lay the foundations of this supreme reform—a reform which shall give to the nation the right and the power to redeem itself by its own voice from this bitter curse, by which it has been too long afflicted. We, at least, who are the responsible Government, and who are answerable to the nation for the conduct of its affairs, dare not, and will not, shrink from the responsibility which rightly attaches to us; and it is, Sir, in discharge of that binding obligation that I ask leave to introduce this Bill.

*Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

*SIR EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth): I confess that I listened with some amusement to the very solemn passage at the end of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, in which he told us that the Government really meant seriously to carry forward this Bill in the present Session of Parliament. I am sorely tempted to criticise some of the details of the Bill, for I confess I do not think that the curious and complicated system which has just been expounded to us will evoke from any section of the House or from any part of the country such cordial acceptance and support as will induce the Government ever to give us a chance of discussing it on Second Reading. But before I call attention to some of the remarkable features of this proposal I will deal with the larger statements by which the right hon. Gentleman introduced his speech. He has appealed to us not to look on this as a Party question, and he has said truly that if great social mischiefs exist and Parliament is called upon to remedy them by legislation, they ought not to be regarded as Party questions. If there were here a real mischief to be dealt with, and a real scheme by which we could have any expectation of its being mitigated or removed, there would be no Party organisation or antagonism employed against the proposal. But the right hon. Gentleman has talked of the great interest which is opposed to this scheme. The greatest interest opposed to the scheme is the good sense of the people, which will not tolerate such proposals as this which is put before us to-day. But is there this terrible mischief, which it is necessary to deal with by legislation? I do not admit it. The right hon, Gentleman has talked about this "corroding canker" that is eating out the life of the people; about this curse by which we have been so long afflicted. No one denies that there is a great deal of intemperance, which has produced a great deal of mischief. But to talk about it as "a corroding canker" and as "a curse" in such a sense as the right hon. Gentleman uses those phrases, is to utter a slander on the character of our people. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted statements made by himself in 1893. If I go back to an earlier date, and quote what he said in 1872, it is not at all for the purpose of vexing him with old speeches inconsistent with the present proposal, but because I believe that in earlier times he expressed well, and with full knowledge, the facts of the case. It was not in the right hon. Gentleman's untutored youth, but when he was quite capable of judging the considerations with which he dealt. In 1872 the right hon. Gentleman had been four years in this House, and within a year he became one of the Law Officers of the Crown. He said then—

> "I have heard it said that the greater part of the crime, poverty, and disease of this country is the result of increased and increasing drunkenness. If that were the fact, that is an unquestionable abuse for legislation. But when I come to examine these assertions I find that they cannot be supported."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I had not been at the Home Office then.

*SIR E. CLARKE: If hon. Gentlemen will wait they will see that that observation is not very relevant.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Immediately after I went to the Home Office I supported the Local Option proposal of 1883.

*SIR E. CLARKE: That is not in the least relevant. The right hon. Gentleman continued in the speech from which I am quoting—

> "As to crime, although the greater zeal of the police and vigour of the magistrates have somewhat increased the committals for minor offences, including that of drunkenness itself, there is a marked and satisfactory decrease in all the classes of greater offences which affect the safety of society throughout the kingdom. This will not be denied, for it is a fact of which the Home Office loudly and justly boasts. We at least know nothing of increase of crime here, for the white flag has been flying, and Oxford Gaol has been empty. As to pauperism, the returns of the Poor Law Board show a general decrease of from 10 to 15 per cent., as might have been expected from the increased wages and improved condition of the people; as to disease, I have examined the Registrar General's returns, and I find the most striking decrease in deaths from causes directly attributable to intemperance. The deaths due to these causes, which 20 years ago averaged 46 in the million of the population, have fallen in 1870 to 29, a decrease of more than 30 per cent. Facts like these are worth whole bushels of platform declamation. I see in them no exceptional condition of things which can form any justification for exceptional legislation"

I believe that these statements were perfectly true in 1872; but what has happened since? What is called "temperance legislation" has absolutely failed. Proposals have been made over and over again, but none of them have been accepted. On the other hand, temperance has steadily increased. Those phenomena to which the right hon. Gentleman pointed with great justice in 1872 as an indication of the improved habits of the people, and as showing how unnecessary it was to resort to exceptional legislation, have been increasing rapidly. Crime has so much decreased that the only public buildings with which we do not know what to do are our prisons; and the only class of public servants who are lamenting the impossibility of advancement or promotion are the unfortunate prison clerks. The returns as to disease show the same result; and the diminution in deaths due to intemperance and in pauperism shows that the process then remarked by the right hon. Gentleman has been going on since. But more than that, in the last 23 years we have had ups and downs of national prosperity, and increases and decreases in pauperism and crime. But there is no relation between the amount spent by people on drink, and the pauperism and crime of the country. Pauperism has been observed to increase when less money has been spent on drink; and indeed that is the usual course; for the expenditure on drink, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer must know, has relation, not to the evil habits of the people, but to the capacity of the poorer people to give themselves more of those enjoyments and indulgences which the great majority of us are constantly able to enjoy. While this excellent change has been taking place, temperance legislation has made no progress at all. During the last 25 years there has been a series of proposals in regard to this matter. The Permissive Prohibitory Bill was abandoned in order that recourse should be had to Resolutions, and Mr. John Bright, after that Bill had been abandoned, said there were not five persons in the House who believed that, if it had been passed, it would ever have been adopted in the country. The right hon. Gentleman remembers what those Resolutions have been. He has said this ought not to be made a Party question, and in the large sense to which I have referred I agree with him. But it has been made a Party question for the last 20 or 25 years. The organisation of the United Kingdom Alliance has been worked as if it were an auxiliary organisation of the Radical Party. Every Member of Parliament knows perfectly well how that organisation has been worked. Liberal Members of the House know that the organisation which has induced them to accept proposals of what is called Temperance Legislation is an organisation which does not represent by any means the whole of the Liberal voters in the constituencies; it represents very often a minority of those who support the hon. Members; but that minority is so well organised, so well drilled, so absolutely determined to subordinate to that particular question all other issues, that they have obtained a force in the House which I do not believe their numbers at all entitle them to, and which I believe would be found to have absolutely no effective authority amongst the people if ever it came to apply such a measure as this. My experience is, that I have never stood at an election without having a temperance meeting, said to be a non-Party temperance meeting, held in the place I have the honour to represent, and I think on every occasion the two candidates opposed to me have been on the platform taking part in these neutral operations. And what has happened is this. From time to time, as it was thought desirable for the purpose of affecting electoral action, this matter has been brought forward and a speech made by one of the Leaders of the Party opposite, which could be quoted as an encouragement to those long-enduring and long-suffering teetotallers who were beginning to lose confidence in the Party to which they belonged. Everybody knows it has not been seriously meant. In March, 1880, a Resolution in favour of Local Option was defeated by a somewhat substantial majority. At the General Election, shortly afterwards, the Liberal Party were returned with their large majority, and in June, 1880, there was a majority of 88 in favour of Local Option. One would have thought that a Ministry that had a majority of 88 on this subject, and was destined to stay in Office from 1880 to 1885, might have found some opportunity for indulging the great desire of its life to pass a Local Option Bill. Oh, no! The "corroding canker" existed then, I suppose; the national curse was afflicting the people, but not a step was taken to legislate. In 1883 a Resolution was proposed calling upon the Government to take immediate action, and nothing could exceed the solemnity with which the right hon. Gentleman opposite then dealt with the matter. He said he was speaking, not only for himself, but for the whole Government—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian prompted him as he spoke, and authorised him to say he was speaking for the Government—when he said they recognised the absolute urgency of the matter. Twelve years have passed, and there has been no serious attempt to deal with the question on the part of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends. That urgency lasted 12 years. The "corroding canker" has continued for 12 years without any serious attempt to deal with the question on the part of the right hon. Gentleman or his friends, who have only used it as an instrument for advancing electoral operations. From time to time it is mentioned here in the hope that the speeches would be circulated, and might do something to persuade the Member for Cockermouth that at last something was going to be done. What has happened this year? I shall listen with great interest to the speeches I trust we may have from the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth and the hon. Member for Bradford, in the hope that they will tell us what they think of the change of front on the part of the Government. In 1893 the right hon. Gentleman introduced a Bill which had a provision for Local Veto properly so-called—that is to say, a vote was to be taken in an area, similar to that which is now prescribed, by a constituency almost the same—it is now parochial electors instead of municipal electors. The Resolution required a two-thirds majority in order to carry it, and that was to be a Resolution to shut up all houses altogether, subject, of course, to the exceptional licences of which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken. In dealing with that Bill the right hon. Gentleman explained why it was that the Bill was confined to the question of Local Veto. He said:—

"I desire, in the first instance, in order to clear the ground, to inform the House that the Bill I ask leave to introduce is not a Licensing Bill at all. It does not profess to deal with the Licensing Question. The Licensing Question is one which requires to be dealt with, and which will have to be dealt with. It never can be, in my opinion, a satisfactory system that licensing should depend on persons who have no popular mandate whatever in the matter; and, therefore, no doubt Licensing Boards will hereafter have to be created, and will probably have to devise a Licensing Committee."

He then went on to say:—

"I wish, first of all, to state that the Bill I have to lay before the House is not a Licensing Bill. This is important, because if the question is raised whether the Bill is for the reduction of the number of licences, I say it is not. That can only be done by a Licensing Board. These are very important questions, and proper to be raised, but questions which do not belong to the Bill I have to lay before the House."

Later on, in the course of the same speech, the right hon. Gentleman said the question of the reduction of licences could only be dealt with on a comprehensive plan. But before introducing this Bill the right hon. Gentleman has received directions of a different character. In November last the Prime Minister went to Glasgow, and made a very interesting speech upon, amongst other subjects, the Licensing Question. He said:—

"We, as you already know, have introduced a Bill on this question; it was introduced in 1893, and it was on the model of what is called the Liquor Veto Bill. It was not introduced in 1894, because of circumstances of which you are familiar. But I do not build such high hopes on the Liquor Veto Bill as some of its supporters are prone to do. I think it is a step in the right direction, because, after all, it strikes at the root of the matter; but prohibition of drink is a matter for local control. It is a matter, indeed of local police."

That is a most important and valuable statement. The Prime Minister went on to say:—

"Will the Liquor Bill shut up as many houses as we suppose? On this point I, for one, am not perfectly certain. I say it is a step in the right direction, but I am not sure if, between the choice of all or none, communities will be found to give unhesitatingly a large vote in favour of none."

The noble Lord also said—and I presume it is in consequence of this opinion that the right hon. Gentleman has been directed to bring in the Bill in the form in which we have it to-day:—

"I myself believe that in any ways it will be a more practical measure to give some option in a Bill of that kind, an option of control and diminution as well as of total annihilation, and I am inclined to think that in that respect the Bill of Mr. Maclagan, which is now under the charge of Mr. John Wilson, offers a larger prospect of really controlling and reducing the drink traffic than this Liquor Veto Bill, which is a production of the United Kingdom Alliance. Now, the president of the United Kingdom Alliance said that nobody could make a speech upon liquor to please everybody, and therefore I shall not pursue this perilous subject further except to say this, that, in my opinion, you will never deal with this question in a piecemeal fashion or a fragmentary fashion."

The passage I have read is a passage in which the Prime Minister said what sort of a Bill he would like. He went on to say:—

"You may lay down a principle in an advance Bill so to speak and follow it up later and more fully, but if you are to grapple with this enormous question you will need all the force of the great Parliamentary majority and all the time a Parliamentary Session can give you."

So that we have this pleasant situation to-night. We have a Bill introduced which throws over the United Kingdom Alliance. This is a Licensing Bill. A Bill for the reduction of licences involves an authority given by a public vote for the existence of a certain number of licences, and in that sense it is a recognition of licensing, and is, as the right hon. Gentleman pointed out in 1893, a Licensing Bill. Why is that adopted? Because it is perfectly clear that a simple veto would probably have scarcely any effect in the country, and for several reasons. This question appears to be argued by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as if we were all agreed that for a certain class of persons—not ourselves, but people not so well off as we are—total abstinence from intoxicating drinks is a good thing. By this time the general opinion and general experience of the world is, that for the majority of people a moderate consumption of intoxicants is a good and not a bad thing. Some time ago we had the opinions of medical men bandied about on one side and the other, and it has occurred to me that one of the best tests in this matter would be one gathered from the experience of the

Front Benches above the Gangway in this House. I think that if you were to try and select a number of men who thoroughly represent different classes, different kinds of education and training, different traditions, different national influences—you could not get a better all-round representation of men whose experience should guide you than you would find in the, say 25, Gentlemen who habitually sit on the Front Government Bench and the 25 Gentlemen who habitually sit opposite to them, and, of course, in a certain number of years —suppose you take 20 or 30 years —that would mean a very large number of persons bringing all their different experiences to bear. I believe there is one Member of the present Government a total abstainer. [*Laughter and cries of* "Name?"] I think the hon. Gentleman the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), a Member of the present Government, is one; but I do not believe a second total abstainer could be named amongst all the men who have sat on those Benches during the last 30 years. I cannot imagine a more complete test upon this question, than that such a body of men of different constitutions and tastes, subject to considerable mental and physical strain, should find an aid to health in a moderate consumption of intoxicating liquors. Sir, there is a most important omission in this Bill, as there was in that of 1893. The Bill, I notice, does not propose to deal with clubs. You will find it absolutely impossible to deal satisfactorily with this Licensing Question without dealing, at the same time, with clubs. If this Bill were to come into operation, and all the public houses in a particular district were shut up by the votes of a two-thirds majority of the people voting, you would find your difficulty in regard to clubs would be ten times as great as your difficulty in dealing with licensed premises; and that difficulty in regard to clubs the right hon. Gentleman does not in the least propose to deal within this Bill.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I ought to have said that I was perfectly conscious of the necessity of dealing with clubs; but, as the provisions of this Bill will not come into operation for three years, we think there is plenty of time to deal with the matter, and we think it would be more advantageous to deal with it in a separate Bill than in this Bill.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I can quite understand that; but I hope the proposals of that separate Bill will be before us when we are dealing with this Bill. In speaking of clubs, I am not referring to clubs of which we are Members, such as the expensive West End clubs. But the whole place is covered with workmen's clubs, which supply drink in circumstances and under conditions which, I think, are often hurtful to the welfare of the clubs themselves; and which certainly remove for a great many people the limitations on licensed houses. And unless you provide for these clubs in the same measure, or at the same time, as you deal with the Licensing Question, you will find that a great number of other clubs will arise and will take the places of the public houses in the social economy, and thus create a very great difficulty indeed. The most satisfactory time, then, for dealing with the clubs is when you are dealing with the whole Licensing Question. The principal addition to this Bill, as compared with the Bill of 1893, is a provision by which it shall be competent for municipal or parochial voters, by a vote of two-thirds majority to shut up the public-houses, or, by a simple majority, to reduce the number of public-houses by one-fourth. How difficult it will be to apply that provision in different localities any one will see who gives a little thought to the matter. I have tried to get the proportion of parochial voters and municipal voters to the whole population. I find the proportion is about one-sixth or one-seventh of the population. Say there are 6,000 people in a district, one-half the population, roughly speaking, is over 20 years of age. There are only 1,000 voter amongst these 3,000 persons over 20 years old; but you will probably only get about 600 to vote; and of these 600 voters, 400, if they voted for extinction, could put an end not only to the existence of retail licences, but to the total sale of liquor—except under the restricted licences to which the right hon. Gentleman referred—in that district with a grown population of 3,000. That seems to me a most extraordinary proposal. If you are to indulge in what the right hon. Gentleman years ago called "democratic despotism"—if you are to enable a certain proportion of the people to shut others out from obtaining and enjoying those things which they enjoy as innocently and reasonably as we enjoy them ourselves, surely it can only be done by establishing a great and overwhelming public necessity? I say there is no such public necessity. I say our people have, during the past quarter of a century, advanced in sobriety, thrift, and industry, and have become a higher-toned people in every respect. Why, then, cannot we leave things alone? Why need we go on having these essays in licensing reform when the work which is going on steadily amongst the people apart from all legislation is producing such advantageous results? There is also in the Bill what I consider another most extraordinary and mischievous proposition. The right hon. Gentleman says that he would extinguish what is called the ordinary licence, including grocers' licences, but would permit what he calls restricted licences, being those for hotels and eating houses, and the railway station licences to be used by those whom he described in a phrase which very much amused the House—"as people who are not travelling for the sake of drink." It is said that the Bill will not interfere with licensed houses where people have drink with their meals. Why, then, not call it "A Bill to induce working-men to dine at the public houses instead of at home"? If working-men cannot get at home with their meals that which everyone recognises they naturally ought to have, they will be driven from dining at home to dining in the public houses, and if you can imagine a system of licensing in which that existed, I think you would imagine a system which would not last a couple of years after it had been established. The right hon. Gentleman said, in dealing with the question of Sunday Closing, that, if Home Secretary, he would not answer for the preservation of public order in London if universal Sunday Closing were suddenly enforced. Supposing, in a particular district, containing 3,000 grown people, 400 voters decided that all public houses should be closed, and that nobody should have any drink at all unless he could get it from his cellar or his club, or unless he had his meals at a public house, I should like to hear the Home Secretary say what would be the difficulty of enforcing authority and order in this case. This system, as I venture to call it, is an injurious and a complicated system. It is not to come into operation for three years, and I understand, if this Bill were passed, there might be a Vote, say next November, with regard to the shutting up of public houses in a particular district, and then that Resolution would stand, although it would not come into force for three years. But I do not attach importance to the Resolution for shutting up the public houses of a district altogether. I do not think it likely that in any place with a considerable population such a resolution would be carried. It might be carried in the ward of a town. The majority of the people of a particular ward might be so happily circumstanced as to be able to do without public houses themselves; and might be careless of the convenience of their humbler neighbours; but if they were to carry such resolution the only result would be the sending of the trade to the next ward, and, as a consequence, the creation of local difficulties of a serious kind. I therefore do not attach importance to the resolution for the total closing of public houses. But, in regard to reduction, an extraordinary proposal is made. Take the case of a large area with 120 public houses. There would, naturally, be a difficulty in getting local opinion to fix on a particular reduction, and that difficulty the right hon. Gentleman had escaped by taking an established reduction. If the people of the district want a reduction at all they must vote for a reduction of 30. But having voted for a reduction of 30 in the public houses, who is to decide what particular public houses are to be shut up? Not the people, but the justices. The effect of passing a resolution that the number of licences is to be reduced is therefore to give the magistrates a clean sheet to say that they may or may not grant any licences at all. Now, it would be utterly contrary to their duty not to grant licences at all; because the duty of the magistrates is not to exercise their own capricious judgment as to whether licences are or are not to be granted. What they have got to do is to licence respectable and reputable people to keep houses for the accommodation of the necessities and wants of the people.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That is not the law.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I beg your pardon, it is the law. That principle runs through all the Licensing Acts; and over and over again, in cases where the magistrates have passed an arbitrary resolution that they would give no more licences, the Queen's Bench has laid it down that that was not the business of the magistrates; and that it was the duty of the magistrates to grant a licence when a proper case was made out for it. This would be under cover of a resolution proposing to reduce the number of licences, putting the magistrates in a position to refuse all licences altogether, and people who had voted for only three-fourths of the existing licences would find their decision interpreted into a decision that there should be no licences at all. But suppose the magistrates had to say which 30 licences would be taken away, what do you think would be the strength of the opposition in a district to that proposal? Nobody would know that it might not be the very house which was the most convenient in his own neighbourhood which would be struck down, and everybody interested in any way, or sympathetic in any way, with any house which then existed, would join together in opposing such a resolution, and I believe you would have upon the Statute Book an idle proposal which would have no effect at all. The right hon. Gentleman gave an instance which appalled the House of a street of 27 houses where 15 were licensed houses of one kind or another. I think I can guess where it was. I think it probably was Portsmouth, and probably a street where the houses are not used for the resort of the resident population, but are in the neighbourhood of the quays where there is a large floating population, which requires to have a number of licensed houses.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: The British sailor.

*SIR E. CLARKE: That may be, but I do not see why the British sailor should not have his drink if he wants it just as much as the British legislator. I agree there probably is an enormous excess of licensed houses there, but I am not sure you would do any good by reducing by one half the number of licensed houses. Then we come across this extraordinary delusion under which hon. Gentlemen have been arguing for years past, and which I thought would have been dismissed to limbo by that letter of the right hon. Member for Midlothian—namely, the idea that by limiting the number of public houses you materially affect the consumption of drink. I remember in 1880 quoting a remarkable and interesting paper, written by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, which had appeared in one of the reviews a year or two before. The right hon. Gentleman took great pains, indeed, to examine by statistics whether there was any ascertainable relation between the number of licensed houses and the amount of drunkenness, and with his article he published an interesting chart, where 100 of the largest towns were arranged in a list, and lines were drawn indicating the proportion of convictions for drunkenness to the population and the proportion of licensed houses. There was no conceivable relation between one line and the other, and it was perfectly clear that, with regard to 100 of our largest towns you could to-morrow diminish the number of licensed houses, and at the same time do nothing whatever to deal with the question of drunkenness. I think it is sometimes the other way, and that there is very often much more drinking induced by the splendid show and lavish ornamentation of places which, because they are doing a large trade can afford to become so very attractive, than by the quieter, but respectable and humble tavern. I thought this idea had been dismissed. What the right hon. Member for Midlothian said was this:—

> "The mere limitation of numbers, the idol of Parliament for the last 20 years, is, if pretending to the honour of a remedy, little better than an imposture."

When all these strange proposals are being made to reduce the number of public houses I think that evidence of fact which was given some 16 years ago, and this testimony of opinion from the Member for Midlothian, ought to be sufficient to dispose of proposals of this kind. There is one other subject on which I wish to say a word, and that is Compensation, which I do think is a serious and important subject, not because it enables one to use hard language, for I am not going to put it in that way at all. But, in the case of a man who has properly conducted the trade which the State has recognised by taking licence duties from him, and allowing him to open the house, I do think that to arbitrarily take away his licence would be an injustice and an indefensible interference with property, and I do not think there is anything in the illustrations which the right hon. Gentleman gives. I remember some years ago refusing to give pledges at all upon the question of Sunday opening. I look upon that as a matter of police; where the State, recognising the existence of the trade, which it has encouraged and protected and privileged, and from which it has got a very large amount of money, has a perfect right to regulate the existence of that trade; and I do not think it can be put at all as a matter of confiscation when the State interfered with regard to Sunday Closing. As to the beershops, the right hon. Gentleman is quite mistaken about that matter. I will not go into the technicalities of it, but I think he will find that he is quite mistaken, and that after the passing of the Acts of 1880 and 1882 there still remained the beershops licensed under the Act of 1869, which continued to have the privilege—and have to this day—of retaining their licences, except on certain specified grounds. With regard to Compensation, I am not going to deal with those phrases about confiscation, robbery, spoliation, and so on, by which the right hon. Gentleman tried to discount any attack which would be made on his Bill. My view with regard to Compensation is this: I do not believe you will ever get a substantial reduction of the number of licensed houses unless you give some sort of compensation; for the public feeling is, that to take away a man's livelihood when you have given him a licence to carry on business in a particular place, and when he is carrying on that business honestly and honourably, is a thing the State has no right to do. If the State changes its mind and thinks it would be better if this trade were not carried on, then, surely the loss ought not to fall on the individual, but on the community; and there should be some sort of compensation given for the loss of advantage he has sustained. This has been recognised again and again. Mr. John Bright himself said that care ought to be taken, and there ought to be a reference to compensation. In 1880 the right hon. Member for Midlothian, when supporting a Resolution of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, said that he would have been better pleased with that Resolution if it had contained some reference to the principle of equitable compensation. I cannot say that I think the Government is in earnest in this matter at all. But if they are, I believe they would find that their progress in this sort of legislation would be made much more easy and effective if they were frankly to recognise the hardship which their plans would inflict upon honest and well-deserving citizens, and were to make some compensation for the injury which is done. For myself, I say exactly what I said in 1880. I did not believe then, and I do not believe now, and I have never seen any reason whatever for believing any one of these schemes is desirable to be put in practice. I am not speaking of the Gothenberg, or the Scandinavian, or the other schemes which have been mentioned this evening, the discussion of which stands a little apart from the Debate of to-night. Just see the position we are in with regard to this Question. I have made a collection of Licensing Bills now before the House of Commons, and I find no fewer than 60 Members of this House have put their names upon some one Bill or other containing some suggestion as to licensing authority or scheme. Why cannot we leave it alone? The good work of the improvement of the people in temperance is steadily going on without our interfering by Legislation, and I believe the work which temperance organisations have done, by precept and example, in teaching the people; I believe the work which the State at large has done in widening the area of popular education, and improving the condition of the homes of the people, is worth all the Licensing Bills and temperance Legislation which anybody has ever suggested to this House. As I say, I am afraid we are not likely at any time to have an opportunity of discussing the details of this Bill; but I hope I have said enough to show that, while it does not fulfil the desire of the United Kingdom Alliance, whilst it is a retreat, and a definite retreat, from the position which the Government, under the inspiration of the United Kingdom Alliance, took up in 1893, it still has in it—although they have tried to reduce to something like a practical form the claims of the United Kingdom Alliance — provisions which will aggravate and not mitigate the mischief it is intended to meet, provisions which, if put upon the Statute Book, would either be altogether ineffective, or would be, in their exercise, so directly contrary to the wishes and interests of the people at large, that they could not long have an effective existence.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said, that the hon. and learned Member had referred to the United Kingdom Alliance, and, as he was President of that organisation, perhaps he might be allowed to say a few words on the subject. The hon. Member said this House was full of Bills regarding the sale of drink; that 60 Gentlemen had put their names to one Bill or another, and he asked why could they not leave it alone. The answer was that public opinion would not allow this question to be left alone, and such an instance as that quoted by the hon. and learned Gentleman showed the widespread demand out of doors for something to be done in this matter. This Bill was not the Bill of the United Kingdom Alliance, but the Bill of the Government, brought in by the Leader in that House of the Government on his responsibility, and on the responsibility of the Government itself. He must really say to the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite that this was not a teetotal Bill. The hon. Gentleman searched the Ministerial Benches through and through to see how many men sitting on them abstained, and he found them altogether barren. What did that matter? They were not attempting to make people teetotallers. They were dealing with the law which enabled certain places to be established that many people considered great nuisances, and they had to consider whether the people had a right to protect themselves from those nuisances or not. This was a question for the citizens of this country, whether teetotallers, moderate drinkers, or drunkards. It was more than 60 years since this question of the veto was first suggested by Mr. James Sil Duckingham, an eminent philanthropist of that day. Since then five Parliaments had been elected, and they had done very little in this matter. Not only had they had five Bills, but there had been six Resolutions which the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think very lightly of. The last Resolution said it was

> "Urgently necessary that the local power of restraining the issue and the renewal of licences may be placed in the hands of the inhabitants themselves."

And that was the main principle of the Bill. Every Liberal Government for many years past had agreed as to the justice of this policy. He was struck by a remark of Mr. Schnadhorst's in 1886 when he said:—

> "Only the moral force of the Temperance Party can bring back into power the Liberal Party."

Yes, that was written in 1886, and they had done it in 1892. He wanted to prove that the Government had acted loyally and faithfully in what they were doing. The late Prime Minister, before that Election came off, said:—

> "The Liberal Party were united as one man in resolving that the working man ought to have the same chance of protecting himself from the public house and the beer-shop as the great magistrate and the great landlord has now."

In his humble opinion, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had loyally redeemed the pledges which the Liberal Party made to the country before they went to the Election. The Government had brought in Bills dealing with the Welsh Church and Irish land. These Bills might be right or wrong, and they might be very important, but, after all, they only affected comparatively small sections of the community. This Bill affected some 35 millions of people. He knew nothing about the Bill which was to be brought in to-night. He only knew it was in the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he had confidence his right hon Friend would do the right thing. He was sorry, however, there were exemptions in the Bill again, because that gave the Philistine occasion to revile. Then there were the restrictions and the new options. Of these he was not going to take account, because they were too mysterious and mystical for him. They showed a want of confidence in the justices. He was not going to vote want of confidence in Justices of the Peace, because he was one himself. He left that part of the subject, only saying that as during the last Session or two a good many of his friends had gone up and down saying what a great thing it would be if they had these options and restrictions in the Bill, he wished them joy of them. He would be happy to see what they made of them when the Bill got into Committee. There was one thing he was sorry about, and that was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not thought it necessary to include Ireland within its scope. If an Irishman was capable of exercising self-government in Imperial matters, surely he was as fit as an Englishman to say whether he would have a publichouse next door to him or not. It was not with his wish that Irishmen were excluded from this great benefit. Reverting to the option and restriction clauses, it must be understood that they had not been demanded by the prohibitionists; they had been demanded by a few Members, a few newspaper editors, and a few philosophers, who sat up in attics and did not know anything about it. Still, he recognised that the Bill gave the prohibitionists what they had asked for during so many years, and they should cordially support the Chancellor of the Exchequer in trying to get the Bill through the House. In last Parliament they passed a Resolution, which was unanimously supported by both Front Benches, saying it was a most dreadful thing to sell any liquor to native races. He had been trying ever since to prove to the House and the country that the English were a native race. Zulus, Kaffirs, Hottentots, they were protected. Why were Christians alone to have this liquor traffic forced upon them? What he liked about this Bill was its simplicity; only agitators liked simplicity, and he was an agitator. Years ago, the present Lord Selborne laid it down that there were three duties required of a magistrate in regard to licences—first, he had to consider the fitness of the man who applied for a licence; secondly, whether the house was a proper place; and thirdly, what were the wants of the neighbourhood. The whole object of the Bill was to provide a way by which magistrates might become informed of the wants of the neighbourhood. At present they sometimes made mistakes. Magistrates took care to protect themselves. They would not allow public houses to become a nuisance to themselves or their families; and the family of a working man was as precious in the sight of God and man as the family of any magistrate that ever lived. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had entered upon an arduous task. He would have to fight tremendously to get the Bill through. But they meant to fight. They had to fight a triple alliance. First there were the magistrates. They had the power, and naturally they sought to retain it. Then there was the trade; and lastly there was the great Tory Party, who for some reason thought it right to maintain a system by which public houses were to be forced upon a district against the will of the inhabitants. These three made what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham called a "swollen trinity." He congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on his courage. He was the first Minister of the Crown who had ever brought in a Bill to deal a real crippling blow at the liquor trade. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would have his reward. What greater reward could there be than to destroy intemperance in this country and to introduce happiness into the homes of the people. He would make no prediction as to the immediate fate of the Bill. He was too old for that. The forces of ignorance, of appetite, and of interest would be leagued against it. Who would be on the other side? Every true Liberal who believed in the self-government of the people; every philanthropist who knew the horrors of the liquor traffic; all the best of the working classes; and almost all the religious communions in the country. They must win in the long run. Those who had worked for many long years in this cause believed in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. They believed that, having put his hand to the plough, he would not turn back. If he succeeded he would have done more than any statesman to abate the greatest curse which ever existed in this country. As for the House itself, they had heard the Speaker in his valedictory address express the heartfelt hope that it might have centuries of honour, and dignity, and usefulness before it. Whatever fate the House had before it, it would never do anything more honourable or more useful than to pass this measure.

Mr. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) desired to know why, if this Bill was to accomplish so many good results, it was to be restricted to England, Scotland, and Wales? If there was any measure which would be properly applicable to Ireland surely it was a measure which was in its nature a species of Home Rule. It would be difficult to know why the Government had not extended the Bill to Ireland, if they did not recollect that there were certain Irish constituencies where it would not give satisfaction. Yet Irish Members were not unwilling to pour down the throats of Englishmen and Scotchmen a measure which they would not have for themselves. The drink system was not, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, the outcome of our law; it was the outcome of national trading. It was true that the law had intervened for the purpose of restricting the trade, but it was quite a fallacy to say that drink could be put down by legislation. You could not make men moral by Act of Parliament. Then the right hon. Gentleman asked why the public should not have as great power of preventing the sale of drink as the owner of the land. That was a most unfair and utterly unsound proposition in the sense in which it was attempted to be enforced. The owner of the land exercised his power by virtue of his rights of ownership. Would the Chancellor of the Exchequer advance the proposition that the community had as good a right over a man's land as the man himself had? A man did not always prohibit public-houses on his property. It might be that he would be glad to have them erected on his land. He might not wish to have a public house, or an hotel, or even a church erected, say, in Grosvenor Square; but in the country, on the high road, a public house might be erected without injustice to anyone whatever. With regard to the Bill, the proposal was to give to the local authority power to assert a local veto and something more. That was to be Local Option. The Government were perfectly wise in saying that the area should be restricted—small and not large areas. Large areas would be intolerable, and involve, probably, a revolution if any attempt was made to carry it out all over the country. If they were to say that liquors should not be sold in any part of England, it would probably produce a revolution; that would produce a revolution in any country. It might be done in a small area, and for this reason. If they applied the local veto and Local Option to a particular parish, the people of that parish had only to cross over the border and get what liquor they wanted. They might restrict the sale in parish A, but that would cause a double quantity to be sold in parish B. Why should they turn a nuisance out of one parish into another parish? Another fault which would arise in this connection was the increased electioneering. They had now School Board elections disturbing the public mind for some time, parish and County Council elections, and, at this rate, they would become a nation of electioneers. They would have cliques all over the wards; they would have gatherings in public houses, and, on the other hand, meetings in schools and various other places. They would have the whole place up in arms in a species of civil war. That would not be a desirable state of things. But they were told that they would not have a fresh election until the end of three years. Of course, the moment an election was over the defeated party would set about preparing for the next fight, so that the parish would be kept in a state of turmoil. As soon as one party gained a victory the other side would begin at once to organise for the purpose of setting aside the verdict given by the electors. Then all kinds of influences would be set to work. It would not be a case of argument. All sorts of representations would be made to the electors, and all kinds of motives would be brought to bear. Even if they carried the Bill they would no more stop drunkenness than they could stem the

Thames by tipping into it a few cartloads of stone. They would have people getting liquor in. They would have men forming themselves into clubs. There was this further point. With great propriety there is to be no interference in a man's own private house. If he could afford it, a man might order in his barrel of beer or half-dozen of whiskey and he could drink as he pleased—he might get drunk without incurring any penalty whatever. Was that fair? Was that dealing out the law equally between the rich and the poor? The Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with compensation, and said that he heard the words robbery and plunder. After the Welsh Bill and some other Bills he did not wonder at those terms being employed. If it was not robbery and plunder, it was gross unfairness and gross injustice. That was the charge they made as regarded that particular Bill. It was provided that the magistrates had power to restrict one-fourth of the licences. Look at the jobbery that would result in picking out the one-fourth! In some cases £10,000, or £20,000, or even £50,000 might be sunk in one of these establishments. They would have to reduce 120 by 30. How were they to pick them out? That was not to be done by the voters, but by the magistrates. He did not want to say one word against the magistrates. He had seen at quarter sessions, when licensing questions had arisen, such crowds of magistrates that the bench could not hold them. They would have all manner of jobbery, and decisions arrived at which would be grossly unfair. He ventured to say that this was a power which ought not to be put into the hands of any magistrates. The discretion of the Magistrates had been misunderstood by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There were two classes of licences dealt with by the Magistrates. The first was the licences of public-houses, where spirits and wines were sold under the old Licensing Acts. In these cases there was a certain discretion vested in the Magistrates, but it was not an absolute discretion by any means. It had been the custom to continue these licences, and it would be an injustice to discontinue them except on very exceptional grounds. "Sharpe *v.* Wakefield" had decided that the discretion of the Magistrates was not an absolute but a judicial discretion—in other words, a discretion to be exercised in each individual case according to the wants of the neighbourhood. If the Magistrates were of opinion that there was no necessity for a particular public house, having regard to the necessities of the neighbourhood, they could, in the exercise of their judicial discretion, refuse to renew the licence, but they had no other power. Should they refuse to renew licences on the principle that the number of houses ought to be reduced generally, their decisions would be overruled by the Court of Queen's Bench. Then, Section 19 of the Act of 1869 protected all beer licences which were in existence in March, 1869, and gave distinctly to every beerhouse keeper a vested interest in his licence, which could not be taken away unless he failed to fulfil any one of the four conditions which the Act mentioned. All these circumstances were now to be disregarded in order to carry out the utopian ideas embodied in this Bill. It was very easy to talk as if, when dealing with public houses and beerhouses, they were only dealing with big brewers and hotel keepers, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to know that in many cases it was the property of widows that would be dealt with—widows who were dependent upon their public houses for their maintenance and that of their families. Was that House going to sanction a Bill that would take from a number of persons of that class their ordinary means of livelihood? Let the right hon. Gentleman do what he could to ameliorate the evils of the drink traffic, by all means. He would join the right hon. Gentleman in any attempt to put down any abuse that might attach to the trade or any of the evils of the trade; but if the right hon. Gentleman wished to accomplish any good it would not be by means of this Bill. The mtasure would interfere with vested interests to a very large extent, and would tend to promote that very intoxication and mischief which it was precisely the avowed object of the Government to prevent.

*MR. H. BROADHURST (Leicester) said, that he had listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who upon this subject was probably the ablest and most competent speaker in that House. He remembered the first speech delivered by the hon. and learned Member after his informal election. It was a most brilliant speech upon a subject resembling that now under consideration. But the hon. and learned Member, in spite of his ability and the advantages which he enjoyed, had, in his opinion, failed to make out a case against this Bill as a whole, or against a portion of it. A fair case might have been made out by the hon. and learned Member, whose speech was rather a brewer's speech than a publican's speech, for he argued rather from the standpoint of the interests of great brewers than from that of the interests of the operative publican. The part of the Bill which would empower Magistrates to limit or reduce the present number of licensed premises he regarded as by far the more practicable portion of the measure. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth had pictured the difficulties which the Licensing Magistrates would experience in coming to a decision as to which public houses should be placed among the suppressed fourth, and the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down had declared, to his surprise and almost horror, that the proposed plan would promote a great amount of jobbery among the Justices of the Peace in this country. That was the first time he had heard anyone in that House declare that the Benches of Magistrates were likely to be guilty of jobbery in dealing with licences. He had himself been engaged in this work of licensing for some years, and from his experience he certainly did not believe that there was jobbery on the part of his colleagues on the Bench. He did not hesitate to say that there would be no difficulty in selecting the licences that should not be renewed in the area with which he was connected magisterially, and in other districts he believed that the question of selection could be disposed of with equal ease. In all crowded districts there were a great number of licensed houses which were not necessary for the convenience and requirements of the labouring community.

*Sir E. CLARKE explained that the difficulty of which he had spoken was not so much the difficulty of selecting which fourth of the houses ought to be shut up, but that, inasmuch as no one would know beforehand which houses would be closed, everyone interested in any of the houses would be fighting against the adoption of the Resolution.

*Mr. BROADHURST said, that a similar difficulty would arise under any scheme for the limitation or reduction of public houses. In the country there was a general agreement, among Conservatives and Liberals alike, that the number of licensed premises might well be reduced to the advantage and benefit of all sections of the community. In any endeavour to effect such reduction he believed that they would be joined by a very considerable number of the most powerful, the most sensible, and the most independent of the members of the publican class. This portion of the Bill, therefore, could be carried into operation in some districts of England with ease and in a short time. He regretted that there was no Law Officer of the Crown present, though it was a great pleasure to see an ex-Law Officer sitting opposite. He wished to call the attention of the Government to a matter which was omitted from the Bill, and to a very great evil which existed in connection with that matter, which was what was popularly known as the "tied-house system." His information and experience in regard to that system led him to say that it was an evil connected with the drink trade which was almost as great as some of their friends alleged the drink trade itself to be. He was one of the Members of the House included in the celebrated 60 to which his hon. and learned Friend drew attention in his excellent speech. The suggestion then made was not a suggestion of his own. He had often taken the advice of a great man not to introduce Bills. The suggestion was the outcome of a meeting of most respectable licensed victuallers in his own constituency, and the Bill to which his hon. and learned Friend had referred came out of that. He could not, therefore, be charged with inventing this himself for political or electioneering purposes. The object of the Bill which he introduced was to make the occupant of every public house the real occupying tenant, and to give him the right to buy his liquor from whomsoever and wheresoever he thought proper, in order that his customers might have a better opportunity of being supplied with the very best material that they wished to purchase. The bare mention of this Bill in the public press had brought upon him a labour which he never would have conceived to be possible. The amount of correspondence with publicans in all parts of the country was appalling. The tales of wrong, injustice, and almost amounting to robbery therein disclosed, would surprise even his hon. and learned Friend with his great experience of men and of the world. A more hideous form of despotism and slavery it would be scarcely possible to conceive in this country than that to which these poor people were subjected. Not only were they, in some cases, tied down in the matter of wine, beer, and cigars, but they were forced to buy even lucifer-matches, wherever the brewer thought proper to dictate. The least amount of resistance was followed by the destructive notice to quit, and a man might find himself and his family in the street, after only a few days' notice, at the hands of his oppressors, without mercy and without consideration left to go into the workhouse, or to commence life afresh. He had also received letters from brewers who had acknowledged the great evil from which the community was suffering in this special direction; who had declared to him that they would be perfectly willing to see the whole system abolished tomorrow, and who had declared that they only continued the system because others did it. Only the other day he saw the Report of a speech made by a brewer in the country, declaring that the tied-house system ought to be dealt with, and that he had not a word to say against the Bill which had been introduced to deal with it. The overwhelming mass of the tied-house tenants in this country would welcome as a great act of liberation and freedom the insertion in the present Bill of the Government of a clause dealing with the hideous and monstrous injustice to which he had now drawn attention. He sincerely hoped that the Financial Secretary to the War Office would convey this message to his colleagues, and would ask them to prepare such a clause before the Committee stage; and, further, that he would convey to them the intimation that, if they did not do so, he (the speaker), would himself prepare and propose a clause, and would take the earliest opportunity of dividing the Committee upon the question as to whether Englishmen should, in future, be free men, or whether they should continue the slaves of the great brewing interests of this country.

MR. S. EVERSHED (Staffordshire, Burton), referred to the speech of the hon. Member for Leicester dealing with the question of the tied-house system. If the hon. Member carried out the intention which he had indicated, and incorporated some practical plan in the Bill, he thought it would effect far more good in the suppression of excessive drinking than any other clause of the Bill. He did not think that this was a question in which the brewers were especially interested. He did not think the Bill would in any sense affect the desire or curtail the means enjoyed by the people to drink whatever beer they chose. Working men were not likely by any prohibitive means to be prevented from getting such beer as they might desire. But the Bill sought to impose upon the people a degree of prohibition which he believed they would resent most strongly, and which they would view as a great insult to their intelligence. From the point of view of the working men, therefore, he viewed the Bill with much ill favour. In the course of his speech the Chancellor of the Exchequer quoted liberally from the speeches of Lord Randolph Churchill. The right hon. Gentleman, however, only quoted Lord R. Churchill where it suited his purpose, and omitted to quote the noble Lord on that portion of the Bill which was, after all, exceedingly vital. No doubt Lord R. Churchill was animated by a strong desire to do something in the direction of limiting excessive drinking, and he was sure that the sympathies of most hon. Members supported him in that desire. By the Bill the power was given to localities to sweep away licences and destroy licensed property without any compensation. The late Lord Randolph Churchill had said over and over again that he would never be a party to such confiscation. There was an excessive amount of drinking in this country, but during the last few years, as the habits of the middle classes had materially improved, so the habits of our working classes, he believed, had been materially improving. They were now better educated, and he did not think it was right to impose upon them a coercive prohibition in regard to beer while they of the better classes could take their beer, wine, or spirits, whenever they liked. They were proposing to sweep away the property, goodwill, livelihood, and occupation of those engaged in the trade. The Bishop of Chester, who was a man of great intelligence, and who had given much thought to this question, had said that Local Veto without Compensation was against the conscience of England, and he believed that was a true sentiment, and that in a number of cases the Bill would be therefore inoperative. The Bill would not touch those who had their cellars at home, whereas it would be put in operation against those whose life of toil made them need such refreshment most. If the provision in regard to small areas were put in force in a town in which there were several wards, all the public houses on one side of a street might be closed, while all those on the other side were open, and this would lead to jealousy and constant strife, and while it might confiscate and destroy property on one side of a street, it would double the value of property on the other. Did any reasonable man think there would be less drinking if the prohibition was obtained in one ward? Those who wished to drink would go into the wards where it was not prohibited. Hotels, refreshment rooms at railway stations, and clubs would not be touched by the Bill, while the only place where the working man could obtain refreshment, the village inn, the public house, or beer-house would be closed. That would be imposing a disability—he would say an insult—upon our working men, which they did not deserve. At present, the retail trade was regulated by law, but the prohibitory clause of the Bill would destroy that control; and the consequence would be, that, where the public-houses were closed, clubs or sheebeens would spring up, and they would have places where there would be unlimited drinking with no inspection, no control, and no hours of closing. The best regulation which in his memory had been made in regard to public houses was that which was made by Lord Aberdare, when he was Mr. Bruce, which made it compulsory for public houses to close at 10 o'clock in villages in the country, and 11 o'clock in more populous places. He thought they might even extend that principle a little further. The Bill which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had now introduced was somewhat better than that which he introduced in 1893, and perhaps if he had an opportunity of introducing another Bill in two years time he might go a stage farther and make a still greater improvement. He looked upon the present measure as a gross interference with the rights of the working man. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had advised them not to consider this as a Party question, and he would obey that advise, for although he was, and had been, a loyal supporter of the present Government, he could not support the present Bill, which he thought was more likely to create than to abolish evils.

*Mr. A. MONEY-WIGRAM (Essex, Romford) said, that as a member of the trade affected by the Bill he welcomed the opportunity of bringing the subject to a definite issue. He thought, after his speech, the only logical conclusion the Chancellor of the Exchequer could have come to would have been that no Government should shirk the responsibility of dealing with the manufacturer and importer as well as the retailer of intoxicating liquors when approaching this subject. He would ask those hon. Members who were habitual buyers of intoxicating drink, what right they had to hold up their hands at the wickedness of the other contracting party, the sellers, and why did they propose to ruin them without the slightest remorse? The Government had not proposed to deal with clubs. The Chancellor of the Exchequer now saw the difficulty, and was prepared to meet it by bringing in a Bill for the purpose. He had only to refer to the Excise or the Police to back up his own opinion that, given the inconvenience of the want of licensed houses, a great stimulus was given to unlicensed drinking shops in the shape of clubs. He recognised gladly that the Chancellor intended to deal with the matter. With regard to the reduction of licensed houses, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would allow that the trade had always been ready to help. Their proposals were embodied by the late Lord Aberdare in his Bill, which he (Mr. Money-Wigram) wished had been carried in 1874, and which would at least have brought finality; and when the right hon. Member for St. George's introduced his most ill-fated proposals in 1891, the trade did its share to reduce licences. The difficulties foreseen in 1892 had hardly been met. The Chancellor of the Exchequer then said—

> "If the question is raised whether the Bill deals with the reduction of licences, I may say it does not. That can only be dealt with by a Licensing Bill, because you require a Licensing Board. Without that you cannot say whether the reduction should be one-third or two-thirds."

That he had got over by naming the amount as one quarter. But he went on to say: "We must have a separate Board for the purpose," as he did not approve of the action of Magistrates, nor that their duties should be handed over to the County Council. And when the Magistrates came to decide which of these houses were to be exterminated, what position would the Government find themselves in? The Chairman of the Essex County Council and Licensing Board had done as much, if not more, for temperance reform than anyone else. In the *Contemporary Review* he showed how he had reduced the number of licensed houses to a fair ratio of the population: one to 1,000 in towns, and one to 500 in country districts. He had done it by telling licence holders that before he would grant new licences for a growing district—and in the part of Essex he represented he had been specially favoured—he must have two, three, or four licences in exchange. Were men who had invested their capital in buying up licences to obtain the licence granted to be told that the latter was of no value? In London the trade had not, and never had been, holders to any extent of licensed property. He spoke on behalf of retailers rather than of the brewing interest. The position of the trade was amply described by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he introduced his Bill of 1893. He told the House that this traffic was a monopoly which Parliament had created by law, and proposed to regulate. Were those who, on the strength of this, had invested their capital, to be told they would have no remedy if Parliament should think fit to take it away by confiscation? The trade rested its case on the broad grounds of existing law, established custom, and the statements of public men. He would remind the House that Parliament had always legislated so that the public should have reasonable facilities for obtaining the drink it required. The Act of 1828 consolidated all previous licensing Acts, and was the superstructure on which the present licensing system was built up. It was introduced as an Act to do away with any unnecessary difficulties in obtaining licences. Beer being held to be the second necessary of life in this country, it was contended that there ought to be no more difficulty in obtaining a licence to sell it than bread, which was the first necessary. This idea gained ground, and in 1830 beerhouse licences were granted by the Excise instead of by the Licensing Justices in the case of the more fully responsible licensed houses. This continued until 1869, when Lord Rookwood (then Sir H. Selwyn Ibbetson) brought in his Act to bring these beershops under the same authority as the more fully licensed public-houses. He would ask the House to notice that in dealing with these beershops or beerhouses for the sale of beer both on and off the premises, of which at that time there were 49,000, as compared with 69,000 fully-licensed houses—in dealing with 40 per cent. of the whole of the licensed property, that House gave to what were known as protective beershops an absolute vested right of renewal, except in certain cases of misconduct. Could it be seriously contended that that House, which was dealing with them on the ground of the mischief they were creating, could ever have intended to put them on a superior footing to the fully-licensed houses which existed at the time. Coming to 1872 and 1874—and Sec. 42 of the former was the most important—under these a license holder, except in the case of opposition, was not obliged to attend the Licensing Sessions. Would the Legislature render him liable to be fined £5,000, £10,000, or £15,000 unheard? Further notice must be given to the owner where a licence was refused, showing that the Legislature respected the rights of the owner of licensed property. Not only this, but the owner, and even the mortgagee, might appeal to Quarter Sessions against the refusal of a licence to his property. It required three endorsements (of which notice had to be given to the owner) before a licence could be forfeited for misconduct. As Parliament had legislated, so the Executive had acted. In the case of a licence holder dying, the Government exacted from his heirs full probate duty on the value of the licence, and even when—as was constantly the case in London—it had been proved after six years that the property was valued too low at the time of probate, then the Government stepped in and claimed extra duty on the estate. For the purposes of assessment local bodies also included the full value of the licence in the quinquennial assessment, and on this assessment the Government took its share under Schedule A. Then, where public bodies for public improvements scheduled a street, they were bound to pay full compensation, not only to the licence holder and owner, but even where it had been held in the Queen's Bench Division, and where the owner had a reversion, at over 20 years distance, on the value of the property. Further, the practice of the Magistrates in nearly all cases had been to insist that licence holders should buy two or three licences before a new one was granted in exchange. It was poor work quoting the statements of public men, who might, for one reason or other, have changed their minds. But he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that irritating dictation, fair treatment, and common sense had the same meaning now as 20 years ago, and it was absolutely impossible for them, although for good reasons they might have changed their minds, to divest their words of the terrible significance they had for those who had invested their capital on the strength of them. In the last few months they had heard a good deal about the value of a Resolution of that House. He would remind the House that in the last Parliament, at the instance of Mr. Forrest Fulton, the House passed, by a majority of 71, a Resolution declaring that the principle of equitable compensation should be introduced when a reduction in the number of licences was carried out. Speaking on behalf of the trade, and wishing to state their case as moderately as possible, he desired to say that the Trade maintained that the House should in this matter, as it had always done in the past, compensate those whose property was taken for public improvements.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, Govan), congratulated the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Introduction of a Bill which had been looked forward to with great interest by many people in Scotland. So far as the Temperance party was concerned the right hon. Gentleman might depend upon their loyal support. It had been said that there was only one abstainer on the two Front Benches. To the honour of the hon. Member for Morpeth, he set a good example to those who were expected to carry out principles that would promote the happiness of the people. If the gaols were being depleted, it was a lamentable fact that the asylums were overcrowded and lunacy was making alarming strides; and the increase of it was attributed in great measure to indulgence in strong drink, whilst as to the crime that remained the late Lord Chief Justice Coleridge had declared that crimes of violence filled the calendars, that they mostly originated in public houses or were due to drunkenness, and that if we could make Britain sober, we might shut up nine-tenths of the gaols. A vivid picture had been drawn of the consequences of taking away a licence from a house by means of which a widow was maintaining a family; but not a word had been said about the widows and families that had been left in destitution through money being spent in public houses. It was said that the attempt to carry out Sunday Closing in England would lead to a revolution. The same thing was said of Scotland 40 years ago. Yet Sunday Closing had been carried out in Scotland without provoking any manifestation of violence and with great benefit to the country; and so far as the Scotch people were concerned, they would on no account give up the privilege they possessed. The principle of the Bill that ratepayers should have a veto power over licensed houses, had long been advocated in Scotland, and patiently waited for. It was brought before the House for many years, by the hon.

Gentleman who then represented Linlithgow (Mr. Maclagan); and in 1888 he was successful in carrying the Second Reading of a Bill without a Division. In 1864, when the hon. Member for Cockermouth (Sir W. Lawson), brought in his Permissive Bill, 10 Scotch Members voted for it and 24 against. In 1883, the Local Option Resolution was supported by 46 Scotch Members, and opposed by two. To-day 54 out of 72 Scotch Members were pledged to support a Local Veto Bill. The evils of the drink traffic were admitted on all hands by both sides of the House. At every step it impeded and frustrated those who were seeking to do good, and, apart from the opposition of vested interests, it was admitted that some effort must be made to grapple with this evil. In Scotland there were 184 parishes in which there was no licensed house. In these parishes there was prohibition, but not by the will of the people: in each case it was prohibition by a landlord who decreed that on his domain no licence should be held. Why should a power possessed by individual landlords as owners of property, and exercised by them in their own interests, be withheld from the great masses of the working people who desired to be delivered from the snares and temptations of the public house? There were landowners who let ground to be built upon on the condition that no public houses were to be opened on the estates. In the south and west of Glasgow there were districts without them, but the districts consisted largely of terraces occupied by merchant princes; while in the slums, public houses were prominent at all the corners. Thus the temptation was greatest where the power of resistance was least and immunity was enjoyed by those who had comfortable homes and the blessings of social life. He was most anxious to impress upon the House the necessity of doing something to protect the great masses of the people. Glasgow was governed by a model corporation, and what had they done? They had resolved to abolish all licences on Corporation property, finding that the sale of drink on Corporation property was not consistent with the highest interests and best welfare of the citizens of Glasgow. He had, within the last few weeks, received a copy of a Resolution passed by the Magistrates and Commissioners of Police of Govan by a majority of 13 to 2, asking him to use his best endeavours with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to speedily bring on his Bill for the purpose of giving the working classes the necessary protection of the Local Veto and to urge him to have it as speedily as possible passed into law. He hoped that he had fulfilled his duty in that respect, and that his constituents would not be disappointed, but that something would be done in the way pointed out that afternoon. He hoped that, in the interests of the great body of the people and in the interests of that religion which they all held dear, something would be done to stop the ravages of this iniquitous traffic.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down might possibly require in his native land some restrictions on the traffic which they did not need in this country; for by some recent statistics he found that in Scotland there was a general increase of crime. The hon. Member was not quite happy in his statement in regard to lunacy. He stated that the consumption of alcoholic liquor led to lunacy, but a more recent opinion was that that terrible complaint was attributable to another liquor. In a report issued with regard to some part of Ireland the great increase of lunacy was attributed to the use of tea. The hon. Member had also quoted the statement of Chief Justice Coleridge that drunkenness was the great cause of crime. A later, he would not say a greater, authority, Mr. Justice Grantham, speaking at Hereford only a few days ago, stated that the absence of crime in that county might possibly be attributed to the fact that they consumed a very wholesome liquor called cider, and he even went so far as to say that he thought it also affected their moral character in a satisfactory way. His objection to this measure was based on two grounds—one was that it was grounded on an entirely erroneous assumption as to the moral and physical condition of the people of this country, and the second was that it was a gross insult upon the working classes. The assumption on which the necessity for any legislation of this kind was based was that drunkenness was a national vice, that it was the cause of all the crime, all the poverty, and all the misery in this country. If that was so, of course great numbers in all classes of society were addicted to this vice. Let them go through these classes and see how the matter stood. There were the peers of the realm. There was a saying "drunk as a lord," so he supposed that at some time or another these excellent people were addicted to taking too much. But the House might be quite sure that if that offence attached to them now someone would have mentioned the fact in the agitation which was going on in reference to that Assembly, but no one appeared yet to have made that accusation against them. Then let them take the professional classes, the middle classes, of this country. Would anyone venture to say that drunkenness was a prevailing vice among them? It was common knowledge and common experience that, for the last generation or two, these classes had entirely reformed themselves in the matter of drunkenness without any intervention of the State. One hundred years ago drunkenness in these classes was not considered any disgrace. Now drunkenness would shut any one of them out of decent society. It was thoroughly well-known that the higher and middle-class people of this country were sober people. What was left? Only the working classes and the residuum. How were they to deal with the residuum? They must deal with them by repressing them by laws intended to affect them and to prevent them from corrupting the rest of the community. But they must not restrict the rest of the community in order to improve the mere residuum, which they would always have in all communities. So there were only the working classes left, and were they going to say that this national vice was entirely indulged in by the working-classes? They were the class whom they had entrusted with every practical power in the State, with all political power, with all local power, and with the power of spending our money, and were they going to say they were not capable of spending money of their own? And yet, if they examined society from its summit to its base, they were the only class to whom they could attribute this prevailing vice. He opposed this legislation because he said that the assumption on which they acted, that the working-classes were drinking helots, was an entirely baseless assumption, and as every class of society had reformed themselves by the process of local option, individual option among themselves, so they also had that same opportunity, and were using it too. He opposed it too, because it was directed against the working classes. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Bill in 1893 he said—

> "What is the use of our reducing the hours of labour if we take no care of what is to be the employment of that leisure which we add to the lives of the working-classes."

There was the assumption in those words that if they gave the working-classes an extra hour of leisure they would go to the public-houses and spend it there. The right hon. Gentleman also said—

> "What is the use of increasing wages if the margin is dissipated in drink?"

Who dissipated the margin in work? Why, the working-classes. He said, therefore, distinctly and emphatically, that this legislation was directed against one class of the community only, and that was the working-class, on whom they professed to rely for their support in the country. But did the working-classes think so, or not, themselves? He held in his hand a printed paper called "The Working Man's Protest in reference to this Liquor Traffic Local Control Bill." It was signed by representative people—by the chairman and presidents of different trade societies and by the representatives of the Oddfellows, the Foresters, and Shepherds. They condemned this Bill, which was practically the Bill of last year, because it was directed against the convenience of the poor man only, because it left untouched the cellar of the rich man, and specially provided him with refreshment rooms when he travelled by rail, and with hotels when he got to his journey's end; but it allowed no accommodation to the working-man who, in a vetoed district, desired to refresh himself with a humble glass of beer. This measure was a direct insult to the working classes. And even assuming that they were the drunken helots which the promoters of the Bill made them out to be, was the Bill wanted? Were there not means open to the working classes of reforming themselves—means which they had already employed? In 1893 the Chancellor of the Exchequer drew a picture of a country village with a church and chapel at one end, a savings bank at the other, and a number of public-houses between; and he represented the religious services as neglected, and the savings as being diverted from the bank, in consequence of the existence of the public houses. The right hon. Gentleman must know that the savings of the people had largely increased within the last few years; and as to the poverty and other evils which, as he alleged, followed from this "national vice," Mr. Charles Booth, who was surely an authority, had said that within the last ten years there was less poverty, crime, and drunkenness than in any previous decade. This Bill was not required. Like the razors which were not made to sell, this Bill was not introduced to pass; and probably the House would hear no more of it. It was a piece of grandmotherly legislation according to the definition of such legislation given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself; and if the country had much more of it no one would be able to perform the commonest functions of nature except under the note of a sanitary inspector. Who were the people who promoted this Bill? Many of them were wealthy persons—Baronets and the like—who had injured their digestions by over-eating, and who had to go to German baths in the autumn, where they drank something so detestable that it took away their appetites and cured them by starvation. Having spent at these baths in a month as much as would keep a working man for the rest of his life, they came back with weak heads and renovated stomachs to interfere with the life of the working man. It was a case of Dives advising Lazarus to leave off dining well, and to take a little water for his stomach's sake.

MR. W. S. CAINE (Bradford, E.) said, that while there had been a great deal of criticism of the practical and useful measure which the right hon. Gentleman had introduced, not one alternative remedy had been proposed for the evil which was admitted on all hands to exist. Perhaps just one remedy had been suggested by the hon. Member for Hereford, who urged his fellow-countrymen to drink cider. But cider was almost as alcoholic as beer; and, while too much beer produced a headache, too much cider produced a headache and a stomach ache as well. The hon. Member had spoken of the Bill as a gross insult to the working classes, by depriving them of the right to get liquor. The hon. Member could not have listened to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or have read any of the previous measures on this subject. When this Bill was passed, it would not interfere with a single public house. Before it became operative it would have to be adopted by the localities. Who was going to adopt it? [An hon. MEMBER: "Nobody."] The prohibitory clauses could not be adopted by a bare majority. Two-thirds of the electors of a constituency must vote in its favour.

SIR E. CLARKE: No; two-thirds of those voting.

MR. CAINE said, that he would deal with that point later. If electors did not vote, it was their own fault, and they must take the consequences. It was said that the Bill was to be crammed down the throats of an unwilling people by a body of fanatical teetotallers. The number of total abstainers in the country was known; they were well tabulated and organised, and they were not more than one in nine of the electors. Before the public-houses could be closed, therefore, it would be necessary to induce five-eighths of the customers of the liquor shops to vote for the Bill. The public houses were, therefore to be placed in the hands of their own customers, and not in those of "a body of fanatical teetotallers." The main body of the customers of the public houses were undoubtedly the working classes; so how could it be said that their right to have liquor if they wanted it, was being taken away? The Bill placed the liquor traffic in their hands, and left them to decide whether or not the public-houses should remain open. The ex-Solicitor General (Sir E. Clarke) said that two-thirds of those voting only would be able to close the public-houses; and he had made an elaborate calculation to show that 400 voters in a constituency might deprive all the rest of the right to get liquor. Would he use the same argument in respect to public libraries, or water, or drainage, or any of the other subjects which were now left to the option of the constituencies?

SIR E. CLARKE: The Act relating to water does not deprive anybody of the opportunity of getting water.

MR. CAINE said, that it must be remembered that the public-houses were established as a public convenience; and some people regarded them as a public nuisance. The Bill put it into the hands of the people themselves to decide whether they wanted the convenience, or whether the nuisance was to continue. It was simply an extension of our present system of local self-government, and the principle of the measure was "writ large" over the whole system of local self-government. Parish Councils were permitted to put into operation 5 adoptive Acts.

SIR E. CLARKE: None of those are prohibitory.

MR. CAINE said, that they were prohibitory. If in any locality a majority voted against free libraries, for example, they would prohibit free libraries being established. The principle was exactly the same. The present Bill was simply an adoptive Act; and in another aspect it was simply an amendment of the existing Licensing Law. In granting licences the bench of magistrates had three important considerations before them: First, the character of the house; second, the character of the licensee; and third, the wants of the locality. The last was as much a requirement of the present law as the other two. He was a member of a bench of magistrates who went round the district in a wagonette and visited all the public houses to see whether they were wanted or not. This Bill would instruct the magistrates how to deal with the licences. One thing was quite certain—that the public conscience was thoroughly awakened on the question of Temperance. It was agreed that the existing system was altogether wrong and must be altered. This Bill was a practical and statesmanlike attempt to deal with the difficulty. He would not say that the Bill was all that he himself should like: and it might be the subject of some criticism. But it was much better than nothing; he should have no hesitation in supporting it on Second Reading, and there were very few alterations which he should wish to see made in Committee. This was not their Bill at all, it was the Bill of the Government—the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Bill. But it took an enormous stride in the direction in which temperance advocates had been travelling, and they would be extremely foolish if they did not take the same stride. There was, however, no finality about the Bill; it did not close the controversy; temperance advocates could still endeavour to get more. But it was a Bill which would have a far-and wide-reaching effect upon the sobriety of the country. There was a strongly-rooted dissatisfaction at the way in which magistrates had in times past planted liquor shops here and there amongst the community. There had been little talk about compensation to-night, and he was not surprised at that, because the question of compensation was pretty well finished off when the last Government introduced it. But when they talked of compensation, it was well to remember what injury was done by the presence of liquor shops to the surrounding property. He recollected that when the Grocers' Bill was introduced a meeting of the owners and occupiers of public houses in Liverpool was held to consider the question of the danger which threatened their property. At that meeting a man got up and said he lived in Hope Street, at one end of which a public house had been opened. He derived his income from four houses. Previously to the opening of the public house the four houses brought him in £220 a year, but subsequently to the establishment of the liquor shop he only received £140 in rent. "I want to know," he said, "who is going to compensate me?" and the chairman of the meeting ruled him out of order. He (Mr. Caine) could, and so could any one, name a good deal of property which had been distinctly injured by the establishment of public houses in its neighbourhood; but what was property compared with the moral welfare of one's children. He knew something of the poor districts of London, for he had worked in them for the last 10 or 12 years. He had a mission hall in one poor district, and was practically the minister there. There was a public house at each end of the street. He believed they belonged to Liberal Members of Parliament; but that was neither here nor there. In that

School Board District there were 38 public houses, and he believed that if this Bill were law, there would be little difficulty indeed in inducing the people not only to close public houses on Sunday, but to apply the Measure in its most drastic form. He did not look with dread upon the possibility of general Sunday closing in London: it would be a great blessing to London, and there need not be any fear of riots or violence of any kind. The devastating effect of a public house upon the district in which it was placed was known to everyone, and what he and his friends were striving for was the right of the people of the country to protect themselves from having liquor shops thrust upon them against their will. This Bill gave them that power, and they would be thankful for it. The Measure went upon the lines the Temperance Party throughout the country had always advocated. What they had always asked for was protection. He admitted that temperance principles had made great strides during the last ten years, but that was not owing to anything the Conservative Party had done, but to the total abstinence movement. There were now in the country something like seven million total abstainers; there was no wonder, therefore, that temperance was increasing. In asking that in the villages and towns of the country the owners and occupiers of property should have the power to protect themselves against what they believed to be an evil and danger to themselves and their children, they did not seek to exercise that power by a bare majority. They were willing to accept a two-thirds majority, because, as practical men, they knew they could not change the habits of the people and interfere with their social customs or diet unless they had a very strong backing of public opinion. But if two-thirds wished to get rid of what they considered an evil, it was surely nonsense not to give them the opportunity. This measure simply amounted to an extension of local self Government. Public convenience and public nuisances had long since been placed under the control of local authorities. Glasgow, for instance, could have their own trams, their own free libraries, their own baths and washhouses; they could supply themselves with water, with lodging houses and other public conveniences. Local authorities had Inspectors of Nuisances, who could compel a man keeping a pig in his back yard to either turn the pig into pork or remove it into the country within 24 hours. But the Borough Treasurer did not come in; he did not measure up the pigsty, and settle what it was worth with or without a pig. Nothing of the kind. The nuisance was suppressed without any difficulty. A man near him used to steam wood for use in furniture. Because the steam made his eyes smart he caused the business to be carried into the country. If other trades could be interfered with in that way why should not public houses be removed? He sincerely trusted his right hon. Friend would stick to his Bill and carry it through the House. The right hon. Gentleman might depend upon it that if he had the courage of his opinions the strength of public opinion behind him would be enough to enable him to carry the Bill. He supported the measure with all his heart. The right hon. Gentleman was on the side of national righteousness in striving to get rid of the most gigantic social evil, we had to cope with, and if he had to go to the country on the Bill the country was certain to rally to his support.

The MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) said, that one of the concluding remarks of the hon. Member who had just sat down illustrated the mischief which would be caused by the Bill if carried. The hon. Member stated that there were two public houses in South London owned by Liberal Members of Parliament, which, should the Bill become law, he by his influence would get closed. He thought he knew the locality to which the hon. Member had referred It was adjoining his constituency. In that particular locality, as in all parts of the world, there were men who would have and must have drink, and one of the certain results of closing those public houses would be that the neighbouring constituency of Brixton would be flooded with people who could not get drink in their own district. The hon. Gentleman had also expressed the hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have the courage of his convictions and press the Bill to a Second Reading. If he could believe that the Bill would go to a

Second Reading he would not have addressed the House. But he believed that, as in the case of the similar Bill introduced two years ago, no more would be heard of the Bill after it was introduced. He asked the right hon. Gentleman, did he or did he not mean business with the Bill this year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Hear, hear.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN said, that when the right hon. Gentleman introduced a similar Bill two years ago, he described it as "of the very first magnitude and of the greatest urgency," and, turning to the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth (Sir W. Lawson), he congratulated him on the prospect of reaching the goal for which he had so long striven. But from that day to this—except when a question was asked about the Bill, probably with a view to raising a laugh—the House had not heard a word about the Bill. He had always thought the goal of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth was to see a Bill of this kind carried. But, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman knew the hon. Baronet better, and if, indeed, he had arrived at his goal when the Bill was introduced from the Treasury Bench, it seemed a very poor goal to have striven for so long. It might be asked why they who were opposed to the Bill pressed upon the Government to carry it to a Second Reading. They did so because they thought it was a great injustice to the trade attacked by the Bill—a perfectly legitimate trade that had been carried on for years under the sanction of the law—that this Bill should be kept hanging over them without being brought to an issue; that the Government should introduce merely for electoral purposes, a Bill which they did not mean to carry through. Why was Ireland excluded from the Bill. Whatever might be the pretence of the Government in regard to the exclusion of Ireland from the operation of the Bill, the real reason was known to everyone in the House. It was to enable 86 Members to vote for a Bill which, if applied to Ireland, would arouse the opposition of the constituencies represented by those Gentlemen. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, when asked a question on the subject a few days ago, said, it would be competent for any Member to move in Committee that Ireland should be included in the Bill. But why should it be left to a private Member to assume a responsibility which the Government dare not take upon themselves? Of course, the argument of the Government was that as Home Rulers they were bound to leave a question of this kind to Ireland to deal with as she thought fit. But the Government had declared themselves to be for Home Rule all round, by supporting the Resolution of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Mr. Dalziel) the other night; and yet, despite that Resolution they proposed to leave Ireland out of a Bill of the first magnitude, which, if it were passed at all, ought to apply to the entire Kingdom, and also to allow 86 Irish representatives to force on England a Bill to which the vast majority of the English Members were opposed, and to which the Irish Members, as Ireland was not included, were absolutely indifferent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that this was not a Party question. He had never made it a Party question. Indeed, he had always said that if he believed Local Option would have the effect of diminishing drunkenness he would most certainly vote for it provided fair compensation was to be given to those who were dispossessed of their livelihood. But, having considered the matter most carefully he had come to the conclusion that local option would not have that effect. The hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth had said, on the introduction of a similar Bill two years ago, that prohibition had succeeded everywhere it had been tried.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I said where it had a fair trial.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN said, the hon. Baronet's first statement was that where it had been tried it had succeeded, but on that statement being challenged he proceeded to say that where it had had a fair trial it had been a great success, and he went on to instance Canada and America. The right hon. Gentleman himself had instanced the case of America.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER dissented.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN: He mentioned the State of Ontario tonight.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I quoted another matter from Mr. Fanshawe's book with reference to compensation. I do not think I made any statement as to its success. I simply read the passage.

The Marquess of CARMARTHEN: Yes, with regard to Ontario. The hon. Baronet said that prohibition had been a success both in Canada and America. He thought that both Canada and America had long gone by the board, and he did not know that anybody could be found to give these as examples of the success of prohibition. What were the facts in the case of Canada? In New Brunswick and Prince Edward's Island, both prohibition provinces, the convictions for drunkenness were more numerous than in any other part of the State. In Ontario in 1888, out of 42 counties and 11 cities there were only two counties which had not repealed the Acts on the first opportunity, and since then these two counties had also followed suit. So that in Ontario at the present time there was not a county or city which had tried prohibition in which it was now in operation. That was a fair proof that prohibition where it had been tried had not been a success. But he need not go so far as Canada to show where prohibition had been tried whether it had succeeded or not. What happened at Cardiff this year? Four years ago a *plebiscite* was taken in Wales on Sunday closing, and he remembered the results being quoted in that House by the hon. Member for Cardiganshire in favour of that hon. Member's views. If figures of this kind were to be used in one sense, he did not see why they should not also be used in another. The municipal electors of Cardiff were asked to say whether they were in favour of the existing state of things—which was total Sunday closing—or of partial Sunday opening. For partial Sunday opening there voted 8,553, and for the existing state of things 2,574. The figures showed that 1,300 more voted for partial Sunday opening than were sufficient to return the hon. Member for Cardiff to that House. That, he thought, was conclusive proof that where prohibition was tried it had proved a failure. Those who had tried it and suffered under prohibition knew from bitter experience that it was not a success. As to this, one had only to read any part of the history of Sunday closing in Wales. Where people were inclined to be temperate this Bill would not do any good, because they would not be made more temperate by the shutting up of public-houses, and those who were disinclined to temperance would not be made temperate by this process. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must himself admit that it was perfectly impossible to force upon a people a law of this kind—which they did not want—prohibiting drunkenness. The right hon. Gentlemen might reply that there must be a two-thirds majority, and that, therefore, the minority would be insignificant, and that the overwhelming force of the opinion of the locality must have its effect. But the two-thirds majority of those who were to decide this question were not two-thirds majority of adult men in the constituency, but two-thirds of those who took the trouble to vote. He should like on this point to quote a sentence or two from the speech of the right hon. Member for Newcastle on the Welsh Local Veto Bill of the year 1891. The right hon. Gentleman, while voting for the principle of the Bill, left himself free as to the machinery and details. He found, for example, that the majority required for the admittedly strong step of prohibition was a two-thirds majority of those who voted, but (said the right hon. Gentleman) he thought with the noble Lord, the Member for South Paddington, that it would not be safe to enforce prohibition by less than two-thirds or three-fourths of the total number of people entitled to vote. That coming from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who had himself taken a great interest in the temperance question, was well worthy of consideration. To force this proposal upon a constituency by a majority of only two-thirds of those who took the trouble to go and vote, would be to inflict enormous hardship on a large number of men who probably, through no fault of their own, had not been able to vote. They could not expect men who were not in active political work to take such trouble, for the sake of somebody else whom they did not know. On the other hand they would get an active Temperance or Radical organisation to make a strong whip-up, and so just squeeze through their two-thirds majority on an extremely small poll, and a large number of men would be shut out from getting any refreshment whatsoever close to their homes. That was a great injustice. The question of area presented one of the greatest difficulties, and he could assure them that knowing, as he did, something about London constituencies, this part of the Bill would be full of chaos and disaster if carried in its present form. If they shut up public houses in one ward or parish they drove the worst characters—and those were the people who went loafing about—into the next constituency where the Act would not have been adopted. And there was also this danger. In their own locality these people were known, and the fact exercised a sort of moral restraint on them. But if they were driven out of their own locality this moral restraint was gone, and they became a nuisance and a source of disturbance. Upon the magistrates was thrown the responsibility of deciding which public house was to be taken and which left. Could men have a greater *onus* placed upon them? If there had been one thing more than another which had been denounced in this controversy, it was the question of compensation. But he should describe this Bill as compensation gone mad. It was absolutely putting a premium upon compensation; because what would happen? If they abolished one public house under this Bill, it had the effect of compensating, right up to the hilt, every one which was left. This proposal was one which would not, for a moment, hold water. The right hon. Gentleman gave some instances of where the magistrates had taken away licences and given no compensation whatever, and he asked why should not the people be able to do what the magistrates had done? He did not know, but he had taken the trouble since the right hon. Gentleman put the question to make some inquiries, and he was informed that in the great majority of cases there was a reason for the licence being withdrawn which did not appear at first sight. These men were bound, under the covenants of their lease, to apply for a licence, but owing to changes in the locality the value of the public house had gone down, because the traffic had been diverted, and though the magistrates withdrew them, in the great majority of cases the men themselves were in favour of the licences being withdrawn. In conclusion he thanked the House for having listened to him so courteously on a subject in which he took a great interest, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that no one more cordially wished for an opportunity of speaking on the Second Reading of the Bill than he did himself.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, that if anybody was to be congratulated on this occasion, it was his hon. friend the Member for Cockermouth. Thirty-one years ago he heard his hon. Friend move for leave to bring in a Permissive Prohibitory Liquor Bill. He was then literally laughed out of the House and off the premises. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who at that time was a blaspheming Saul, was now absolutely transformed into a believing Paul, moving for leave to introduce practically the same Bill. It was one of the most wonderful things in politics that he had ever witnessed, and he was heartily glad that he had lived to see it. He did not rise to criticise the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech, with much of which he entirely agreed and fully sympathised. The real question for the House of Commons was—Would the Bill, if it became law, deal effectively with the great evil of intemperance? He was very anxious that the part of the country from which he came should have an opportunity of trying the Bill, and he had risen for the sole purpose of protesting against the exclusion of Ireland from its operation. Why were the Irish benches so empty? During the 31 years this had been a public question, he affirmed that on every occasion on which issue had been joined in the House, the majority of the Irish Members voting had voted in favour of the principle of Bill. It was quite true that that majority had always been swollen by a heavy Ulster vote. Why, then, was Ireland to be excluded? Was it because Ireland did not require it? Anyone going to the south and west of Ireland would find every town, village, and hamlet, literally stuffed with public-houses, and steeped in drink. In the town of Castleisland, with a population of 1,200, there were 47 liquor shops. Irishmen did not drink more per head than Englishmen or Scotchmen, but they drank out of their poverty, while Englishmen and Scotchmen drank out of their abundance. If the Bill ought to be applied to any part of the kingdom, it ought to be applied to Ireland. The exclusion of Ireland, he said deliberately, was part of a bargain. The 80 Nationalist Members since they came into Parliament had consistently voted against every Local Option Resolution and Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that he could not carry the Bill by the votes of English Members alone. In every Division on the subject a majority of English Members had voted against the principle of Local Option. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman proposed to enlist the support of his Friends opposite. But they were against Local Option—many of them were actually engaged in the trade. Then what was the compact? Leave Ireland out and then all difficulties vanished! Hon. Members from Ireland had no objection, if Ireland were left out, to force this principle upon Englishmen who did not want it. And this was Local Option for England. It might, with great propriety, be given an entirely different name. He did not believe the Chancellor of the Exchequer was playing with the question; on the contrary, he believed the right hon. Gentleman was in deadly earnest. He would vote for the Second Reading of the Bill because he had been committed to its principle by the whole of his life. When the Bill got into Committee he would move to include Ireland, and the little game of hon. Members opposite might not succeed. If the British Temperance party, who received the votes of Irishmen in the dark days when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was opposing them, voted against the inclusion of Ireland now, he would do his best to prevent the Bill passing on the Third Reading.

MR. G. J. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): There are many of us who enjoyed the lucid speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I think we thoroughly understand the meaning of the Bill. We are told that no Party considerations are to enter into this matter—there is to be no passion and no exaggeration. Well, if we get rid of exaggeration we shall have made very considerable progress. We all enjoyed the spontaneous peroration of the right hon. Gentleman. I am sure that peroration was absolutely sincere. The right hon. Gentleman has felt for years the pressure of this great question, and in his final sentences he referred to the responsibility of leaving this matter untouched; and I confess a shiver of disappointment ran through me when, at the close of his speech, he did not announce to us the postponement of the Irish Land Bill and the Welsh Church Bill in order to deal with a question that was eating like a canker into our social life. I wonder also whether it is eating into the social life of Ireland. I believe, from what we have been told, that this is not a Party question, and, as that is so, I think we need not assume that hon. Gentlemen from Ireland, who generally support the Government, will, on this occasion, endeavour to force a Bill upon England by their votes which is not to be extended to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman did not say whether in this matter Wales was to be viewed as a separate nationality. At all events, the position is this—that Ireland by its votes—I hope it will not be so—may impose upon England a state of things which the majority of the English people do not desire, and which the majority in Ireland do not desire. I trust that, in the course of this Debate, or in the course of the Recess, we shall learn that the Irish Party, acknowleging the national spirit which sways them, will abstain upon this Bill from endeavouring by their vote to coerce the predominant partner. I trust we may have the moral support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in bringing about that most desirable consummation. I thought when the right hon. Gentleman said that upon this occasion there would be no Party passion and no exaggeration—I thought that for once we should be free from the rhetorical adornment of his speeches in which he so much delights. He has referred to the conflict between the rich and the poor, and he has appealed to us to discard considerations in order to legislate on behalf of the poor. But the right hon. Gentleman was true to himself. He could not exclude, even upon this occasion, a contrast between the rich and the humble. He invited us to consider the position of the humbler classes, and he contrasted it with the position of those living in Westminster, or St. George's, Hanover Square. Does he forget that these public houses supply the humbler classes with that which we can have in our own cellars? I think we should not force on the working classes legislation of this kind unless we have from them the greatest possible evidence in its favour. We ought to have that before we force on them a Bill which will not touch our convenience in the slightest degree. The right hon. Gentleman says which of us would not desire to have a public house removed from his neighbourhood, but we have clubs and private cellars which supply what we desire. The public house, too, supplies the working classes something besides a place where they can get drunk. Does he not know that the public house is a place, certainly in most of the villages—it may be desirable or it may not be—where the working men meet? It is the place where they not only tipple, but where they meet for social purposes. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted the saying that you cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament—they were to be made sober by their own act—by the enactments of the Parish Council or by some other assembly. It is still a majority which is to interfere with the ordinary habits of the people. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had abandoned his old views because he had become Home Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman has a power, which we all recognise, of putting in as strong language as can be found, the points which commend themselves to his mind. He has such a great power of expression that if we humbler men are unable to put our case in language stong enough for our desires, we are reduced to quoting his words, not as against himself, but in support of the arguments that we are using. The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "If there be any party more pledged than another to resist a policy of restrictive legislation having for its object social coercion, that party is the Liberal party. It is this practice of allowing one set of people to dictate to another set of people what they should do, what they should think, what they should drink when they should go to bed, what they should pay, what wages they should get, and how they should spend them, against which the Liberal party has always protested Now that we are labouring to get rid of one vicious system of legislation we are asked to build up another fabric founded upon exactly the same false and vicious basis. It seems we are to establish protective and inhibiting duties upon the habits of of the people. The policy of the Liberal party has been for generations to effect emancipation from restriction, and if it is now to set to work to forge further fetters for the people I myself will have no part in such a process."

Well, the right hon. Gentleman has been converted, and he has explained his conversion with the candour that always characterises him. He does not care to wear a white sheet, and truly no sheet could be sufficiently ample to cover the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's conversions. His defence is that he was converted from those principles by having been at the Home Office. But how soon was he converted by his experience at the Home Office? That is an interesting question because the answer may throw some light upon the conversion. Parliament was dissolved in April and the right hon. gentleman assumed the duties of Home Secretary, and six weeks after he had gone to the Home Office he voted in favour of local option to which he had always up to that moment been opposed. The conversion was, therefore, rapid and, no doubt, genuine. But what surprises me is that the right hon. Gentleman was able to speak on behalf of the whole Liberal party on this occasion. They had not been at the Home Office. I do hope, then, that the right hon. Gentleman will be indulgent towards us who have not had the advantage of being there if we still adhere to the old tradition which really belongs both to the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party—that we ought not to interfere to this extraordinary extent with the habits of the people. We hail, if not the Bill, at all events many of the sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman. In 1893 he was in favour of absolute prohibition on a popular vote. It is fortunate that the Bill was not carried in 1893, because now he has receded, we do not know exactly under what pressure, from the position which he took up then. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.—"Prohibition is in the Bill."] Yes; but the right hon. Gentleman has receded from this—that he thought it impossible to deal with limitation. [The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.—"I said it was very difficult."] The right hon. Gentleman said:—

> "I find it is impossible to do this unless we introduce licensing boards or alter the whole system of licensing."

But I do not find that in this Bill he has done either the one or the other. I venture to say that, under pressure, he has tried to do the impossible, and I do not think he has succeeded. I compliment the right hon. Gentleman on his sagacity, and I condole with him that, under whatever pressure he is placed now, he has put clauses into his Bill which will be considered by the country to be almost ridiculous and absolutely unworkable. The Member for Cockermouth (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said that it was entirely a mistake to suppose that this Bill was to have the effect of compelling people to be total abstainers. Let me deal shortly with the Bill, and with its double aspect of limitation of licences and absolute prohibition. The latter I call the right hon. Gentleman's part, and the former I call the Prime Minister's part. If you prohibit people in any locality from obtaining drink they will be compelled to be abstainers. They will not be teetotalers, but they will be abstainers by reason of the action of the majority in the locality being determined that they shall not have the opportunity of buying liquor. Now let me touch upon the remarks of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Caine). If the hon. Member had said that this was equivalent to a prohibition from using books, or from using water at all, there might have been some analogy in the cases which he put; but surely it is trifling with the common sense of the House to say that to prohibit the working classes from that which they have always been entitled to enjoy is the same as prohibiting them from having a public library or public baths. You are denying the working classes something which they do not wish to be denied. [Mr. CAINE: "They impose it on themselves."] Do they? I am not in favour of allowing those who have their own private cellars and access to every kind of refreshment that they wish—persons who will suffer no inconvenience whatever from the passing of this Bill—I am not in favour of allowing those persons to coerce those poorer than themselves, who have been in the habit of buying what they require daily from the public houses, and which many consider to be necessary for them. I recall the argument of my hon. and learned Friend, who showed that those who can vote will be able to cocerce a very large proportion of the population, and I do conceive that in country villages in particular any fanatical outburst would be resented most deeply by the working classes. The hon. Gentleman says that the working classes desire this change. What evidence has he to show that? What have the Trade Unions done on this question? They pass resolutions freely on many questions, but they have fought very shy of this one. What have the Friendly Societies said? There might be a kind of voluntary coercion before you come to State coercion. Has the right hon. Gentleman discovered any evidence that the Trade Unions have taken up this matter with enthusiasm? I have seen no evidence whatever of that kind; and I, for one, will not believe that this House will ever pass a measure of this kind until they know that at all events the majority, the great majority, of the working classes are in favour of it. Otherwise we shall be exercising what, to my mind, has no merit whatever. It would be an altruistic, a kind of vicarious virtue, that we should endeavour, by a measure which does not affect ourselves, to take from our poorer friends a legitimate enjoyment. The right hon. Gentleman says that he does not wish to put down the ordinary supply, but the ordinary supply must be cut off if this Bill is at all effective; and the right hon. Gentleman would hardly desire that it should be a dead letter. Before I leave the subject of total prohibition, let me say a word on general considerations. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the enormous number of public houses in a separate street. All these matters are likely to be used on platforms, and we ought to know where that street is. Is it not the case of a neighbourhood in which there is a vast number of men employed, say, in the docks, or in some other large works, who are locked out at a particular time, and, having their dinner with them, wish at the same time to be able to get a glass of beer? We must not deal with this question simply upon general considerations, without carefully considering the demands and wishes and conveniences of the poor. I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman, whom I have often heard dilate on that particular point, will agree with me that the habits of the people must be considered in this matter; and it is because I believe that total prohibition will run counter to the habits of the people that I am against that portion of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman did not deal with one of the most powerful arguments against total prohibition, I mean illicit drinking. Total prohibition does lead to illicit drinking. There will be the whisky bottle at home, there will be the shebeen and the clubs, and the right hon. Gentleman will have to introduce a Bill dealing with clubs. Then, how is illicit drinking to be prevented? Are we to have a system of espionage in order to stop private drinking? If we wanted a body to carry out any such system I have no doubt that the London County Council would be prepared to hunt for hidden alcohol. Unless you have a system of espionage it is extremely doubtful whether the passage of total prohibition will not increase the evils we are seeking to destroy. It is on the moderate drinker that the whole of the inconvenience will fall. There is a new feature in this Bill, a very extraordinary feature, and that is the limitation of licences. Any more extraordinary provision has never been submitted to this House, and I feel perfectly sure that the right hon. Gentleman cannot possibly in his heart think that it is workable. The proposal is that a resolution may be passed by which the licensing justices will be directed to reduce the number of public houses by one quarter—no less than one quarter. I pass by the extraordinary provision that, if by the voice of the people it is declared that they wish to have three-quarters, the justices may abolish the licences altogether. What on earth can be the meaning of such a proposal as that? There must be justices who would be prepared to take advantage of a resolution passed by a parish or any other area, asking that they would like a fourth of the houses to be cut off or not to give them any public houses at all.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: They can do it now.

MR. GOSCHEN: I appeal to the last 20 or 30 years. Justices are not insane. They have no direction from Parliament that they may have any such discretion whatever. If the right hon. Gentleman challenges me on the point I shall go at length into the judgment of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield"; and I should like to repeat in this House the observations which have been made by noble Lords and others who showed that the construction put by the right hon. Gentleman on the judgment in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" is totally indefensible. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the justices would be carrying out the law of this country if, in Kent or elsewhere, they were to abolish all licences whatever? If the right hon. Gentleman passes a Bill and makes a statement that it is the intention of the Bill to place that power in the hands of the justices, it is a different thing. He invites the justices to exercise a discretion which hitherto all legislation has discouraged them from exercising, and no one more than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman has discouraged the diminution of licences; but the right hon. Gentleman now says that not only may they abolish all those licences, but there is a mandatory request made to them that they have to abolish the number of licences by a fourth. Say that there are 20 public houses in a particular area. A resolution is passed stating that a fourth is to be abolished. On what principle are the licensing justices to proceed? There is to be a clean sheet; they are to make a choice and to eliminate five out of the 20 without Parliament having given so much direction as it did to the Irish Land Sub-Commissioners. Can hon. Members not imagine the canvassing, the jobbery, the petitions, the manœuvring in by-ways to be employed, in order to determine for the justices which of the 5 out of the 20 are to be abolished? Supposing they abolish 5 public houses; will not the charge lie against the justices that they have abolished 3 Radical and only 2 Conservative houses; that they have sanctioned the "Royal Oak," but taken away the licence from the "Plantagenet Arms"? If in the circumstances of a parish there are 20 public houses distributed over an area, are they the cause of inconvenience in the east, in the west, the centre, or the north and the south? This was not simply a choice of suppressing licences, but the gradually taking away of a man's livelihood without compensation from a fourth of the public houses, and an increase of value to the remainder. Is that a reasonable proposition? No. The Chancellor of the Exchequer properly said that he had attempted an impossible task, and he has executed it in an impossible manner. I render every homage to the ingenuity of the plan, but when you come to work it out, you cannot, unless you lay down principles to show how that selection is to be made. Take an area where there are only four or five public houses, all with their favourite customers. There are some patronised by the middle classes, and some by the working men; some are friendly to the general policy of the justices, and some are unfriendly. On what principle is selection to be made? Is it not clear that the whole authority of the justices would be destroyed? Whatever they did they would be accused of partiality, and whatever selection they might make would leave bad blood behind in every part of the parish; and the condition of things would be such as every hon. Member would deplore. Would it decrease drunkenness? That is not even proved. I am not arguing this question from any class point of view. I do not envy hon. Members; they will have plenty of petitions from the various publicans in the neighbourhood, who will say:—

> "Bring your pressure to bear on the Licensing Justices, and relieve us from this penalising action on their part."

I think it would not be a clean sheet, but a dirty one, in regard to which all the manœuvres were employed which must ensue when the whole livelihood of these people depends on the action which the magistrates take. The right hon. Gentleman may say that the magistrates do it now. They do not do it upon that scale; and I would like to ask, are these parties going to be heard before their property is transferred to others? Supposing there is a widow who is in possession of one of these houses, and her husband has died the year before. The Probate Duty which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has put on the value of the house has been paid on the assumption that the licence will be renewed. Is the right hon. Gentleman going to abolish the Probate Duty with regard to public houses, looking to the fact that you are going to disestablish, if I may use the phrase, one quarter of the public houses? Observe the gambling of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He is going to raise probate upon them all as if they were not to be disestablished, or how is he going to make a selection when a person dies? The fact is this proposal is too ridiculous to be further argued. It is an impossible proposition, and I really think no one knows it better than the right hon. Gentleman himself. In regard to the question of compensation, the right hon. Gentleman has used the words of the hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland and said that no Bill will ever pass this House which involves the principle of compensation. I believe no Bill will ever pass this House which does not recognise the principle of compensation. However, the hon. Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland is perfectly honest and consistent, though rather fanatical. He says that he would rather that nothing should be done than that one shilling of compensation should ever be given to any publican. He is prepared to continue the present state of things, with all the present horrors from his point of view, rather than give one shilling of compensation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has quoted to us the American and Scandinavian precedents, and he expects us to be guided by the callousness, as he might call it, of the American or Scandinavian conscience; but he has not stated, and I do not think he can, that the same circumstances under which the vested interests have grown up in this country have been reproduced either in America or in Scandinavia. Before we are guided by those precedents he must show that the circumstances are the same, and that they have been taxed as our vested interests have been taxed, and that the legislation under which they have grown up has been the same. May I quote to the House one extract, which ought to reappear in every discussion on this question, from a speech of the right hon. Member for Midlothian? The Chancellor of the Exchequer quoted Australian finance against us in the Budget of last year, and now he quotes American and Scandinavian precedents. Let me put this quotation against those. I think, on the whole, it will command as much confidence and respect in the country. The right hon. Member for Midlothian said :—

> "We ought not to allow our prejudices with regard to this particular trade, or our sense of the enormous mischiefs associated with its working, to cause us to deviate by one hair's breadth from the principle on which Parliament always acted in analogous circumstances—viz., where a vested interest has been allowed to grow up, the question of compensation should be considered when such vested interest is proposed to be interfered with by Act of Parliament."

I am prepared to set that against all the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he was prepared to say neither more nor less than that the licensed victuallers had the same right to compensation that was enjoyed by persons following any other trade or calling which was interfered with by Act of Parliament, and to whom compensation was awarded. I want a frank recognition of the principle that we are not to deny to publicans as a class the benefits of equal treatment because we think their trade is in so many points of contact with, and is sometimes productive of, undoubted mischief. Now the right hon. Gentleman has acknowledged a vested interest, and one decision like that in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" cannot destroy the value of vested interests and equity, because vested interests and the principles of equity have been supported by Parliamentary legislation for so many years. When the late Government introduced these provisions to reduce the number of licences hon. Members opposite said we created by that Bill a vested interest to the extent of from 250 to 400 millions. But hon. Members must remember that fanaticism, like drink, sees double. What does the Attorney-General say?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: When it was stated that there was a vested interest existing in law we staked our reputation for legal knowledge that there was nothing of the kind, and every Court before whom the question came in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" confirmed that view. It was conjectured that the value of the vested interests amounted to 200 or 250 millions.

MR. GOSCHEN: That interruption shows the Law Officers think that by one of these opinions they can override our sense of equity. If publicans have no vested interest in these licences, why does the Chancellor of the Exchequer tax it? I do not know how it happens in Scandinavia or America, but I know that the right hon. Gentleman and I have derived hundreds of thousands of pounds from the view that a licence was not only an annual licence, but entitled to renewal. Does he deny that? [Sir W. HARCOURT shook his head.] He does not! He is not such a robber as he would make himself out to be. Nor am I, or I should share his criminality. But I have it from the Inland Revenue what their work is. I want the House and the country to realise it. The Law Officers say there is no vested interest in licences, and that the holders are entitled to no compensation whatever. I feel a criminal after what I have heard. The Chancellor of the Exchequer not long ago had an estate of nearly three millions, composed almost entirely of the value of public-houses. These public-houses would not have been worth one-quarter of the whole amount if there had been no vested interest. But it was the expectation of the vested interest that put the money into the right hon. Gentleman's pocket. Here is a paper from the Inland Revenue, signed by Sir Algernon West, An authority which the right hon. Gentleman will acknowledge. I say that the publicans have always been taxed on the theory that their licences would be renewed, and they are rated on the same footing.

> "On the death of a leaseholder," says this paper, "in the affidavit delivered by his executor of his assets, he brings in the value of the lease and goodwill combined. Lease, 40 years to run, and goodwill of 'The White Hart,' £2,000; lease, 47 years to run, of 'The Greyhound,' £543; goodwill separately. In each of these cases it is assumed that the licence will continue to be renewed."

Without the licence there would be no goodwill. We have always acted upon these principles, and now we are told on high legal authority that we have been plundering these gentlemen, because there is no expectation of vested interests.

> "On the death of the freeholder of a public-house nothing comes under the tax for probate duty. But the annual value of the house, as treated in the succession duty account, is permanently enhanced by the licence, and in the other case the annual values are capitalised for the whole life of the successor according to the tables annexed to the succession duty on the presumption that the licence will be renewed."

Has the Chancellor of the Exchequer no qualms of conscience? Does he not see that his probate duty may be exacted one year and the next the license may be taken away? The question of compensation has been rightly defined by the right hon. Member for Midlothian, and, in former times, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself; and I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is going to make a change in his Budget, or whether he is still going to tax men on the presumption that they have an expectation, while, on the other hand, he is telling them they are entitled to nothing. I shall be surprised if, with his principles of equity, he does not say he must deal with the question of the taxation of these assumed interests. This is a question which affects the finances of the country very seriously, and one branch of it especially affects Ireland. We have heard that Ireland was going to be endowed with a whisky tax as its main source of revenue. That may be one of the reasons why Ireland is to be left out of the Bill, while she is to be allowed a voice in determining whether England is to be subjected to this coercive policy and this coercive class legislation. It is coercive because the majority is to coerce the minority as regards their private habits. It would be coercion if a majority of this House were to say that no one who was not a total abstainer should be a Member of it; and that which is ridiculous when applied to 600 Members of this House is just as ridiculous when applied to 600 agricultural labourers. Let me ask the Government how far they are going with this Bill? We have been told that a social canker is eating the very vitals of the people; and yet this Bill comes after the Welsh Disestablishment Bill and the Irish Land Bill, in spite of the number of years the question has been before the country. I should not be surprised if we never hear of this Bill again. I believe the certificate of its birth will be the certificate of its death. A Bill so preposterous in parts, and so complicated that the hon. Member for Cockermouth cannot understand it, is not likely to commend itself to the judgment of the people, and it will be disposed of when we have four consecutive days for exposing its absurdities and showing how impossible it is that it should ever pass into law.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I presume, from the moment at which the right hon. Gentleman has sat down, he did not expect that I should attempt any answer to his speech; perhaps he thought it did not require any answer. The right hon. Gentleman said the House and the country wished to see the Bill, and I hope, therefore, I may be permitted to introduce it.

Leave being given, Bill brought up and read 1°.

## CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, he trusted he might be allowed to lay on the Table of the House a Bill which created great interest in Scotland —the Crofters Bill—and that the House would consent that the Debate might be taken on the Second Reading.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer interrupted his right hon. Friend across the Table and reminded him that twelve o'clock was approaching, his right hon. Friend brought his observations to a conclusion with a view of hearing some reply to the arguments which he had advanced. The right hon. Gentleman not having taken advantage of that concession, and having declined to make any reply at all, he did not think they were entitled to ask him to accept without any explanation the introduction of the Bill proposed by the Secretary for Scotland. Let the Secretary for Scotland give them the details of his Bill in the ordinary course, and then there would probably be no objection to the introduction of the Bill.

Bill ordered to be put down for tomorrow.

## DISTRESS BILL.

The House went into Committee on the Distress Bill.

(In the Committee.)

On Clause 1.

SIR R. E. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) asked the Attorney General to give the Committee some information as to the scope and intention of the Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. T. REID, Dumfries) said, that very great complaints were made that County Court bailiffs oppressed poor people while levying County Court executions, and what was desired by the Bill was simply to enable the County Court Judge, if he thought fit, to cancel the certificate of such a bailiff of the Court. It was a Bill that was believed to be desirable in the public interest.

Clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 were agreed to.

MR. E. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) moved to insert a new clause dealing with unlawful distress. The object of the Act of 1888, he said, was to mitigate the severity of the law of distress for rent. Up to that year the old harsh law remained unaltered, and it was possible for a merciless landlord to strip his tenant of everything he possessed except the clothes in which he stood. The Act of 1888, however, exempted from seizure for rent the tenants' bedding, wearing apparel, and tools up to the value of £5. But in London, at all events, this beneficent Act was constantly disregarded, and the object of his clause was to obviate that hardship.

SIR R. E. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that this clause seemed to be entirely new matter, and beyond the scope of the Bill. He should like to know that it had been considered by the Attorney General.

The hon. Member was still speaking at midnight, when the Debate stood adjourned, and the House resumed.

## PERJURY BILL (LORDS).

On the Order for the Committee stage of the Bill,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he had promised to move that the Bill be referred to the Statute Law Revision Committee, with a view to its subsequently coming back for discussion in Committee of the Whole House. He therefore moved that the order for the Committee of the Whole House be discharged, and that the Bill be referred to the Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision.

Sir R. WEBSTER said, that it must be distinctly understood that the House was in no way committed by the reference to the Statute Law Revision Committee. The Bill, undoubtedly, created new offences; but he was willing to consent to the Attorney General's Motion if the right hon. Gentleman thought that it would facilitate the discussion of the Bill by the House.

Sir EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth) thought that this Motion was the introduction of a new and somewhat mischievous practice. He was a Member of the Joint Committee on Statute Law Revision, and it was never intended that that Committee should consider Bills in the first place which were afterwards to be referred to Committee of the Whole House for discussion. The Committee was intended to deal simply with Consolidation Bills, and the present Bill was not simply a Consolidation Bill. He should, therefore, take objection to the Attorney General's Motion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that this matter had been discussed several times already. He had pointed out that although the Bill could not be said to be a purely Consolidation Bill in its present form, because it brought together extracts from about 150 Statutes, yet the design was to make it a Consolidation Bill; and he would renew his undertaking to withdraw everything which appeared to be of a controversial character. In sending it to the Statute Law Revision Committee, nobody was being pledged in any degree.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) thought that there was much force in the contention of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. The best course would be to allow the Bill to run through Committee of the Whole House, *pro formâ*, and then to have it recommitted so that all the objectionable parts could be struck out. Undoubtedly the Statute Law Revision Committee was not the best machinery for the Attorney General's purpose.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said that he was afraid he could not adopt the suggestion.

Objection being taken, the Motion stood over.

## REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (CHANNEL ISLANDS CHILDREN) BILL.

Considered in Committee and reported, without Amendment: Read 3°, and passed.

## METROPOLITAN POLICE (RECEIVER) BILL.

The House went into Committee on this Bill.

(In the Committee.)

On Clause one,

Mr. T. H. BOLTON asked how long the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police was to be absent from his duties?

*Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said he did not know that the Receiver was absent from his duties. The object of the Bill was to make provision in case he was taken ill. There was no power at present to enable anybody to do the work, if the Receiver was laid up with influenza.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment.

## HANDLOOM WEAVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

## BOARDS OF GUARDIANS (IRELAND) (CONSTITUTION AND POWERS) BILL.

Adjourned Debate on Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Law, &c. (13th March), further Adjourned till Monday, 22nd April.

## LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND OFFICE ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ross, Bill to abolish the Office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and to provide for the appointment of a Secretary of State for Ireland.

Bill presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 1st May, and to be printed.—[Bill 199.]

## SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO CHILDREN BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th April, and to be printed.—[Bill 200.]

## PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WARNED.

Address for "Quarterly Return, by counties, of the Public Elementary Schools:—

(1.) Which have been warned by the Education Department under Article 86 of the Code, including Schools from which the Grant has been withheld under that Article.

(2.) Which have been warned by the Education Department that the Annual Grant will in future be withheld unless defects in the School premises are remedied:

(3.) The Annual Grants to which have been suspended for three months or more from the date of the receipt by the Education Department of the Inspector's Report on account of defects in the School premises;

in the following Form:

(1.)

| School. | Department (B., G., M. I.) | Average attendance. | Date of adverse Report. | Reason. |
|---|---|---|---|---|

NOTE.—Schools from which the Grant has been withheld are marked *.

(2.)

| School. | Department (B., G., M., I.) | Average attendance. | Date of warning. | Date at which Grant is proposed to be withheld. | Reason. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

(3.)

| School. | Department (B., G., M., I.) | Average attendance. | Date of receipt of Inspector's Report. | Reason. |
|---|---|---|---|---|

The first Quarterly Return to be made up to the 30th June 1895."—*(Mr. Acland.)*

*Mr. George Russell.*

House Adjourned at Twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

## HOUSE OF LORDS.

*Tuesday, 9th April 1895.*

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### COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

1. Shop Hours.
2. Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act, 1879, Amendment.
3. Army (Annual).
4. Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1).
5. Agricultural Company of Mauritius.
6. Credit Foncier of Mauritius.
7. William Hancock and Company.

### SAT FIRST.

The Lord Mendip *(V. Clifden)*—after the death of his nephew.

### REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (CHANNEL ISLANDS CHILDREN) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. [No. 71.]

### BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

I. Report on the agricultural experiment stations and agricultural colleges of the United States of America.

II. Agricultural Returns for Great Britain, showing the acreage and produce of crops, prices of corn, and number of live stock; together with summaries of agricultural statistics for the United Kingdom, British Possessions, and Foreign Countries; 1894.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

### SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL. [H.L.]

Committee of the whole House (which stands appointed for Tuesday, the 30th instant) put off to Monday, the 6th of May next.

### PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered,—That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended: and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Easter, be extended to Tuesday, the 30th instant.

### STANNARIES COURT (ABOLITION) BILL.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, remarked that it was before the House last Session, and explained that its object was to abolish the Court in Cornwall known as the Court of the Vice-Warden of the Stannaries, and to transfer to the County Courts all jurisdiction and powers of the Stannaries Court. It had, he said, been suggested that it might be desirable to make special provisions with regard to the hearing of mining cases after the business of the Stannaries Court was transferred to the County Courts, and he promised to see what could be done as to this.

Bill read 2ª.

### THE EASTER RECESS.

On motion of The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl of Kimberley), it was agreed that the House at its rising to-day stand adjourned until Monday, the 22nd day of April, at Three o'clock.

The House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday, the 22nd instant, Three o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, 9th April 1895.*

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The House met at Three of the Clock.

### COMMISSION.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned,

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—

1. Shop Hours Act, 1895.
2. Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act (1879) Amendment Act, 1895.
3. Army (Annual) Act, 1895.
4. Local Government Board (Ireland) Provisional Order Confirmation (No. 1) Act, 1895.
5. Agricultural Company of Mauritius Act, 1895.
6. Credit Foncier of Mauritius, Limited, Act, 1895.
7. William Hancock and Company, Limited (Conversion of Shares), Act. 1895.

## RAILWAY (TIMES OF TRAINS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 20th August 1894; *Sir Frederick Fitz Wigram*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 210.]

## LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA.

Copy ordered,

"of Return of the Loss of Life at Sea for the year 1893 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 32, of Session 1894)."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 212.]

## EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

Copy ordered,

"of Statistical Tables relating to Emigration and Immigration from and into the United Kingdom in the year 1894, and Report to the Board of Trade thereon."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 213.]

## EAST WICKLOW WRIT.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) moved that a new writ be ordered to issue for Wicklow, East Division, for the election of a Member to serve in the room of Mr. John Sweetman, who has accepted the office of Steward of Her Majesty's Manor of Northstead. He said that he only brought forward this Motion after discovering that the hon. Baronet the Member for West Kerry, who, by the custom of the House, was entitled to make the Motion, had determined not to make it this day, which was the last on which it could be made before the Adjournment of the House.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) said, that the hon. Member was perfectly accurate in his account of what had taken place between them concerning this writ. He had no intention of opposing the Motion; but he would point out that, in moving this writ, the hon. Member had acted in contravention of the ordinary practice, though it was not a Rule of the House. The reason he had not moved the writ was, that it was seen by the Party with whom he acted that it would be much more convenient if the writ were not moved till after Easter, if the election took place later on. As the writ had been moved, however, he should not oppose it.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said, that this question of the moving of writs had many times been discussed by the House of Commons and between the Whips of the various Parties. He had always understood that the practice of the House had been this: if those who were charged with the moving of the writs did not move them within a reasonable time, other Members moved them. In this case, no doubt, the appointment to the office which vacated the seat was only made the other day; and if the House were not on the eve of the Easter Adjournment, it might be unreasonable for any Member, other than the Whip of the Party to which the retiring Member belonged, to move the writ. But if this writ were not moved now, the effect would not be to consult the general convenience, but the very opposite. This contested election would then last for six weeks. It would begin at once, and would last all over the Recess and a fortnight afterwards. These were the reasons why his hon. Friend had moved the writ, and he respectfully submitted that no practice of the House whatever had been thereby contravened.

MR. T. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) pointed out that the last election kept this seat in the possession of the Irish Party with which the hon. and learned Gentleman did not act. According to the usages of the House, and the unbroken practice of a number of years, the Party in whose possession the seat had been left by the last election were entitled, within certain reasonable limits of time, to a discretion in the moving of the writ. The vacancy for East Wicklow was only made known yesterday; he was informed that the application of Mr. Sweetman for office under the Crown only reached the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday; that it was in the course of yesterday that the application was granted and the appointment issued; and that the appointment might have reached Mr. Sweetman this morning, but that possibly it had not. In former discussions it had been stated that a period of two days elapsed between the receipt of the appointment and the issue of the writ. In these circumstances, by intimating to the hon. Baronet the Member for West Kerry that, unless he moved the writ to-day, he would take it upon himself to move it, the hon. Member for North Dublin had acted in contravention of the practice of the House, and had denied to the Party to which Mr. Sweetman had belonged the discretion to which they were entitled. The hon. Member had put that Party, if they were inclined to rely upon the argument of usage, in a position to oppose the issue of the writ. But that was not their intention. They were sensible that inconvenience would be inflicted on the constituency by the course which had been taken. If the writ were issued to-day the nomination must take place before the end of next week, when, according to the usage of all political parties in Ireland, it was customary to summon conventions for the purpose of choosing candidates. The immediate issue of the writ was taking the constituency at a disadvantage and by surprise, and would render it extremely difficult for the electors to take the usual steps for the selection of candidates. He thought, therefore, that his hon. Friend was right in making this protest; but the writ having been moved, and the Party with which he acted being as ready as any other to face the inconvenience, he should not oppose the issue of the writ.

Motion agreed to.

## ESTABLISHED CHURCH (WALES) BILL.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to give notice that on the Order for Committee on the Established Church (Wales) Bill being read, to move—

> "That it be an instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions with respect to the application of endowments of chapels in Wales and Monmouthshire which are exempt from rates as places of public worship and are registered according to Act of Parliament."

## QUESTIONS.

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### THE "PARTICULARS CLAUSE."

MR. S. WOODS (Lancashire, Ince): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in the Bill which he has introduced to amend the Factories and Workshops Act, provision will be made for the application of what is known as the "Particulars Clause" to other industries, such as factories and workshops where clothing is manufactured, and in the fustian-cutting industry, and others of a similar character; if it does not, will he be prepared on the Committee stage of this Bill to accept Amendments having this object in view.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): So far as I am aware, the clause in its present form covers all the cases in which the practical grievance aimed at by its provisions has been felt and complained of. If there are other cases where the conditions of work are similar, there is no objection in principle to the extension of the clause, but I cannot at this stage pledge myself either to propose or to accept the enlargement of its scope.

### DISTRICT COUNCIL MEETINGS.

MR. S. WOODS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether it is competent or legal for a Rural District Council, or a Parochial Committee of that Council, to meet and transact the business of the township within the walls of a public house. Whether in districts where there are not other facilities of meeting than in a schoolroom in that locality, such schoolroom can be refused when proper application is made by the local authority for its use; whether he is aware that at the present time the Parochial Committee of the Rural District Council of Shevington, near Wigan, are transacting the business of the township inside licensed premises; and, whether he will make full inquiries into this matter with a view of remedying the existing state of things?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I have made enquiry as to the case of the Shevington Parochial Committee, and I am informed that their meetings are held in a large room forming part of licensed premises. The Local Government Act, 1894, prohibits a Rural District Council or a Parish Council from holding a meeting on licensed premises, except in cases where no other suitable room is available, either free of charge or at a reasonable cost; but I am advised that it is doubtful whether the prohibition extends to a Parochial Committee appointed by a District Council where the Parish Council are not themselves the Committee. I am also advised that the right conferred by the Act on the parochial electors to use the public elementary school for certain meetings does not extend to the meetings of such a Committee. The Rural District Council are, however, empowered to determine the place of meeting of the Committee, and it appears to me desirable that they should exercise this power in the present case.

## THE WELSH COMMISSIONERS.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he will lay upon the table an estimate of the probable receipts and expenditure of the Welsh Commissioners for each of the first five years from the date of the passing of the Established Church (Wales) Bill, including in that expenditure the established charges for the Commissioners and their staff, the cost of maintaining the Cathedrals, and the necessary provision for the interest and instalments of the principal of any loans made by the National Debt Commissioners to the Welsh Commissioners? And, whether it is intended that any part of such expenditure shall be charged on property attached to parochial benefices, or solely on the property defined in Clause 3 of the Bill.

MR. ASQUITH: It is not possible to furnish such an estimate as the right hon. Baronet asks for. Apart from other respects in which such an estimate must at this moment be too speculative and contingent to be trustworthy, it could only be made by anticipating, which I have no means of doing, the operation of Clause 4 of the Bill, which provides that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Queen Anne's Bounty shall, immediately after the Bill passes, ascertain what is Welsh Ecclesiastical property, and apportion it as provided by the clause of Clause 5, which provides that the Welsh Commissioners shall determine what are private benefactions; and of other clauses of the Bill. As regards the second paragraph, I may point out that Clause 3 covers, for purpose of transfer to the Welsh Commissioners, property attached to parochial benefices, as well as other property. The intention, however, and, I believe, the effect of Clause 9 (*b*) is that the expenditure referred to in the first paragraph of the question should be borne by the property which is not attached to a parochial benefice, and which will remain in the hands of the Welsh Commissioners.

MR. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon), inquired whether any estimate had been made of the cost of maintaining the Cathedrals.

[No reply was given.]

## COUNTY TIPPERARY MAGISTRACY.

MR. R. M. DANE (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that two appeals from Justices in Petty Sessions, in cases in which Michael Buckley had been convicted for assaults upon a civilian and a police sergeant, acting in the discharge of his duty, respectively, came before the County Court Judge and Justices of the County Tipperary in Quarter Sessions in the month of February last; whether Mr. Patrick Crowe, one of the last-named Justices, who had been but recently appointed, is correctly reported to have stated, upon the case being called on and before any evidence had been given, that he had had an interview with the defendant, and intended doing all in his power to get him off; whether the County Court Judge is also correctly reported to have stated it was highly improper for any magistrate to discuss with a person who was about to be tried before him for a criminal offence the merits of his defence, and that such conduct was calculated to bring into contempt the administration of justice; is he aware that the decisions of the convicting Justices were affirmed, notwithstanding the protest of Mr. Crowe; and will the Lord Chancellor of Ireland call upon him for an explanation of his conduct?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The facts, I believe, are stated with substantial accuracy. I have referred the matter to the Lord Chancellor to deal with.

MR. R. M. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to the proceedings held at a meeting of the Irish National Federation on Sunday the 3rd March last, at Ballylooby, County Tipperary, presided over by the parish priest, at which Messrs. Nicholas Shee and Patrick O'Donnell, two recently appointed Justices of the Peace, attended, when strong resolutions were passed condemning the taking by persons of unoccupied evicted farms in the locality, and demanding the release of Irishmen convicted in England of the commission of serious crimes, and that in support of such resolutions Mr. Shee made a strong speech, in the course of which he stated that it was very doubtful whether the persons so convicted were really guilty at all; (2) whether he is aware that these are the same two gentlemen who attended at a great National demonstration held at Mullinahone, in the same county, on the 28th October last, at which similar resolutions were proposed by Mr. Shee and seconded by Mr. M. Drohan, also a recently appointed magistrate; and (3) has the conduct of these Justices of the Peace been brought under the notice of the Irish Lord Chancellor; and, if so, will any action be taken in reference thereto?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have seen a newspaper report of the proceedings at the meeting referred to in the first paragraph, and have read the speech delivered by Mr. Shee. The other magistrate named as having been present at this meeting did not speak, and took no part in the meeting further than attending. I have also seen a newspaper report of the proceedings at the earlier meeting alluded to in the second paragraph. The resolution passed at this meeting on the subject of the taking of unoccupied farms was very general in terms, and contained no direct reference to any particular case in the district, and, so far as I am aware, no result has followed the adoption of this resolution. The action of the gentlemen referred to has not been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, nor do I, upon the information before me, see any reason for taking this course now.

MR. ROSS (Londonderry) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, in cases of meetings being held to denounce the takers of unoccupied farms, he was in the habit of putting the speeches before the Law Officers of the Crown with the view of ascertaining whether there should be a prosecution or not.

MR. J. MORLEY believed that in nine cases out of ten the speeches went before the Law Officers; he directed that they should go before them. Of course in some cases he formed his own judgment.

## A WELSH CHURCHYARD DISPUTE.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the dispute between the rector of Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog, Denbighshire, and his parishioners as to the payment of fees for the erection of tombstones in the parish churchyard; whether he is aware that an action for trespass was instituted by the rector in November, 1893, against two of his parishioners in reference to the erection of a monument; that the action was settled, and that the terms of the settlement permitted the erection of the monument in question without the payment of the fee, subject to the recognition of the legal rights of the rector in respect to the churchyard; whether he is aware that the rector, notwithstanding this settlement, continues to refuse to allow tombstones to be erected in the churchyard, and that he does so solely on the ground of the non-payment of the fee; whether he will state whether there is any evidence of such fees having ever been paid to previous incumbents; and whether, in view of these circumstances, any course is open to the parishioners by which the immemorial custom of the parish in respect to the churchyard can be preserved?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: My attention has not been called to this matter since I answered a question upon it in 1893. I understand that there was an action which was settled upon the terms mentioned in the question. The rector informs me that he has adhered to those terms, but that they did not apply to all tombstones for an indefinite time, but only to the tombstones in respect of which the action was brought. I am not aware whether there is any evidence of such fees having been paid to previous incumbents. The rector states that prior to the Burial Act, 1880, it was customary to make an offertory at the altar prior to the interment, but since under that Act the burials have been held with Nonconformist rites in the churchyard and without any service in the Church, the custom of making the offertory has been discontinued and no fee received in lieu thereof. I have no jurisdiction to decide the disputed questions both of law and fact which are at issue between the rector and the parishioners.

## BRITISH HONDURAS.

**Mr. E. BRODIE HOARE** (Hampstead): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (1) whether it is proposed to withdraw the whole of the troops from British Honduras at the end of April; (2) what provision has been made for the protection of life and property on the withdrawal of the troops; (3) whether it is proposed to re-establish the constabulary on the same footing as the force which mutinied a few months ago, and was disbanded after all their demands had been granted; and (4) whether the Government will take steps to establish telegraphic communication with Jamaica or some other depôt for Her Majesty's forces.

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES** (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Last January the Colonial Government was informed that the Imperial troops could not be retained for any length of time, and that the reorganisation of their local force must be at once proceeded with. It is now arranged that half the troops will be withdrawn on the 30th instant, and the remainder on July 31. This will give ample time within which the Colonial Government can re-organise their local force, and place it on a satisfactory basis. As regards the last question, it would no doubt be advantageous if British Honduras were in telegraphic communication with Jamaica or elsewhere; but we do not see our way at present to carry through any such scheme, involving, as it would, a very heavy expenditure.

**Mr. E. B. HOARE** asked the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to answer the third paragraph of the question.

**Mr. BUXTON** said, that only half of the constabulary mutinied; the other half were perfectly loyal, and behaved very well during the time of difficulty. He was not at the present moment in a position to say on what lines re-organisation would proceed.

## HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS COMMISSION.

**Dr. MACGREGOR** (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the Highlands and Islands Commission, in their Report, state that in dealing with grazing farms, where only part of a farm has been scheduled, care has been taken as far as possible to leave what, in the event of the scheduled lands being appropriated, would constitute a workable and profitable farm; will he state whether the Commission, according to the terms of reference to it, had power to exclude any lands suitable for the purposes specified in the Royal Warrant; and what course does he propose to adopt in the circumstances.

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir George Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): It is the fact that the Commissioners, in their Report, state, that they dealt with grazing farms in the manner mentioned in the questions. The terms of reference invest them with powers and duties, which were combined with the right of using a discriminate judgment, and in the exercise of these powers in scheduling land, the Commissioners were, and are, of opinion that they acted within the limits assigned to them.

**Dr. MACGREGOR** asked if the right hon. Gentleman approved of the plan of scheduling only the worst part of a grazing farm for occupation by the crofters and leaving the best parts for other uses?

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, it seemed to him very reasonable that, in deciding whether land was suitable, some regard should be paid to the uses to which it was at present being put; but it was a matter which, in his opinion, was for the judgment and discretion of the Board of Commissioners.

### HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

Mr. J. J. CLANCY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what harbours of refuge have been constructed in the United Kingdom since the year 1800; and what has been the cost in each case.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The harbours of refuge constructed out of public funds which are capable of being entered at all states of the tides are as follows:—Alderney, Portland, Plymouth, Holyhead, and Kingstown. Holyhead is the only one of these now under the Board of Trade. It was commenced by the Admiralty in 1847, transferred to the Board of Trade in 1862, and completed in 1873, and the cost of constructing the north breakwater and the works connected therewith, including land, was £1,285,000. The other harbours are under either the Admiralty or the Public Board of Works in Ireland, and I am unable to state the cost of their construction. I have no knowledge of the numbers or cost of harbours constructed by private enterprise.

Mr. CLANCY asked whether there was any difficulty in the way of the right hon. Gentleman getting the returns of all these harbours?

Mr. BRYCE said, he thought it would be a very expensive process, and he could not undertake it without consulting the other Departments.

### NICARAGUA CANAL.

Sir EDWARD HARLAND (Belfast, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, (1) whether he is aware that the United States Government has now appointed a Commission to examine into the question of the construction of a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, through the State of Nicaragua, and to cause the surveys and locations of the proposed route of the canal to be revised; (2) whether Her Majesty's Government will appoint a Commission to co-operate with the United States Commission, so that the investigations might be conducted conjointly; and (3) whether Her Majesty's Government will take all steps in their power to safeguard the interests of this country, in the matter of the construction of the canal in question?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The Board of Inquiry will consist of three engineers, who are to make their report on or before the 4th of November next. Her Majesty's Government could not consider the question of sending anyone to take part in any inquiry by an American Commission unless their co-operation were desired by the United States Government. They are, however, fully sensible of the great importance of this question to the shipping interest generally, and, in the event of the construction of the canal being proceeded with, will take steps to secure for British vessels and commerce as favourable treatment as is given to those of any other nation.

Sir E. HARLAND asked, whether the hon. Baronet was aware that the President of the United States was so impressed by the importance of this undertaking that he was despatching the Commission in a special warship?

Sir E. GREY: I must ask notice of that question.

### LONDONDERRY COURT HOUSE.

Mr. J. ROSS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the rooms allotted to the Clerk of the Crown and Peace for the County Londonderry in the Court House are wholly inadequate for the purpose of holding the Crown Records and other documents, and are insanitary; whether the Clerk of the Crown has reported that the Public Records, of which there are several hundred files in this office are in danger of being lost, and that he is unable properly to perform his duties in consequence of the want of accommodation; whether it has been brought to his notice that the right honourable Mr. Justice Holmes held, at last Derry

Assizes, that the Grand Jury were not bound to provide these offices; and whether, inasmuch as the Treasury receive all the stamp duties and fees in respect of the besiness passing through this office, he is prepared to advise that Department to provide the necessary accommodation, or assist in providing the same in conjunction with the Grand Jury?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham): The duty of providing adequate County Court accommodation rests with the Grand Jury, and not with the Treasury. I understand that the matter referred to in the question is now under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. The expenses of County Court Officers borne on the Votes greatly exceed the receipts from the stamps and fees.

MR. P. M'GILLIGAN, (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman if Mr. Justice Holmes, on the occasion referred to, commented rather severely on the application referred to him by the Grand Jury for increased accommodation for the Clerk of the Crown and Peace, whose salary was ample enough to provide it, whilst he (the Judge) had not a proper desk to write upon, and also stated that the accommodation most required there was for suitors, witnesses, and others, and that the sum of £200 proposed to be expended on the Court House for general accommodation was wholly insufficient.

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: In reply to the hon. Member I have to say that the Treasury consider that this expense should be voted by the Grand Jury. The observations of Mr. Justice Holmes are now being considered by the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

MR. ROSS: Do I understand that although the Treasury receive the fees, they are not prepared to contribute anything whatever?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: The expense of the Treasury is a great deal more than what they receive.

MR. ROSS: In what form?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I cannot tell you that off-hand.

## SEAL FISHERIES.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a proposal has been received from the Government of the United States for the summoning of a Conference of the Powers concerned to deal with the seal fishery in the North Pacific Ocean; whether consent to join such a Conference involves or permits interference with the decisions of the Paris Arbitration of 1893; and whether Her Majesty's Government will refuse consent to join such a Conference unless the Conference be authorised and instructed, on the lines suggested by the Arbitrators at Paris in 1893, to deal with the whole of the question of the seal fisheries, specially including preservative regulations and limits within the territorial jurisdiction of the Powers?

SIR E. GREY: No such proposal has been received. A Bill was introduced in the House of Representatives and passed, which, among other points, provided for the conclusion of negotiations with Great Britain, Russia and Japan for the appointment of a joint commission to investigate the conditions, habits and feeding-grounds of the fur seal herds, and to consider and report what further regulations were needed. The Bill was rejected in the Senate.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any petition or other communication has come from the Canadian Dominion suggesting that, in consequence of the inability of Congress last Session to appropriate the sum agreed upon by the Government to pay the damages to sealers under the Paris Arbitration Award, and in view of the serious financial difficulties thereby brought upon many of them engaged in the sealing industry, Her Majesty's Government can see their way to advance some portion of the sum awarded by way of loan, pending a final settlement with the United States Government?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am not in a position to give any answer to the question at present.

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

MR. E. McHUGH: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Donegal (Mr. J. Mains), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Inspectors of the Local

Government Board have yet reported on the state of the fishermen of Glenvar, County Donegal, as to whether they report that any necessity exists for supplementing the machinery of the ordinary poor law in the district?

Mr. J. MORLEY: As I have already stated in reply to a question by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for East Donegal, it is proposed to open a relief work at Glenvar. The work will consist of the construction of a boat slip, and will be started either to-day or to-morrow.

Mr. McHUGH: On behalf of Mr. Mains, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board Inspector, who attended the meeting of the guardians on the 11th February last, has yet reported the result of his further investigations in the districts of Malin, Glengask, and Clonmany, County Donegal?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The result of the Inspector's inquiries into the condition of the people in this part of Donegal was brought under my notice towards the end of March. The inspector states that the people in the districts mentioned depend to a large extent upon the fishing, which will very shortly commence. The Guardians applied for and were afforded extended powers in relation to the administration of outdoor relief in the Union, and the Local Government Board are of opinion that the resources of the poor law will be able to deal with any individual cases of distress that may occur.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a resolution unanimously passed at a meeting on the 4th April of the Carrick and Kilcar Committee for Relief of Distress, proposed by the Rev. P. M'Devitt, parish priest of Carrick, and seconded by Dr. Harkin, stating that at least 100 families in the Carrick and Kilcar districts were still in great need of employment, and urgently pressing upon the attention of the authorities the absolute necessity of at once providing work for these poor people; and whether the Government will take immediate measures for the relief of this distress?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The resolution was received by the Local Government Board this morning, and no unnecessary delay will take place in inquiring into the matter. I may add that some 61 families from the Kilcar Division have so far been afforded employment on the Relief Works in operation there.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether his attention has been called to complaints of the manner in which relief works are administered in the parish of Partry, Ballinrobe Union; (2) whether he is aware there is but one relieving officer for the five East Divisions (all in a state of distress) of Ballinrobe Union, and that he is a tenant of Mr. Lynch, the landlord of the poorest portion of this distressed district, who is the Local Government Board inspector of this district; and that the administration of the relief works by Mr. Lynch and the relieving officer is impugned by the priests of the district and by the Ballinrobe Board of Guardians; (3) will he explain why the priests are not only not consulted in the administration of the relief works, but their recommendations are neglected; (4) whether he has been furnished with a list of 86 families (550 individuals), tenants on the estate, all of whom, in the opinion of the parish priest, are in need of such help as they might obtain from the relief works which are being carried on in the district, but are excluded by Mr. Lynch and the relieving officer; and (5) what steps he proposes to take for the due consideration of so grave a state of affairs?

Mr. J. MORLEY: (1) Complaints have been made from time to time as to the alleged insufficiency of the Works in Ballinrobe Union, and as to the refusal of the Government to put on the works persons named by the local clergy. (2) Mr. Lynch is not the Inspector in charge of this district. There is one Relieving Officer in charge of the Western District, where works are in progress, and the Local Government Board are not aware whether he is a tenant of Mr. Lynch, the Inspector. The Union is in charge of Dr. Flinn. (3) The Inspector has interviewed the priests in this District, though he may not have found it practicable to carry all their suggestions into effect. (4) Large numbers of names of persons for employment on the works have been forwarded by the local clergy, but it is not considered necessary, at present, to increase the number of persons employed on these works. (5) If it should be found necessary to extend the relief works in this union the matter will be at once reported to Government. I may say, in answer to my hon. Friend, who has asked me a good many questions very naturally on the condition of the people in this district, that I have directed special reports to be ready for me when I go over to Ireland next week.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman give some special consideration to the list of names I have given him on this subject?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I would rather not give any undertaking of that kind until I have actually seen the inspectors who were on the spot, and who, therefore, know how matters stood.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received lists of families in great distress, namely, 86 families in Aughamore parish and 68 families in Loughanboy; and whether, in considering the cases of these people, the priests and the poor law Guardians of these districts will be consulted?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have received the lists referred to, and have sent them to the Local Government Board for immediate inquiry. The Inspector is already, I understand, in communication with the clergy of this district on the subject of the relief operations.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the resolutions of the Milford Board of Guardians with reference to the distress existing in their district and the need of relief works there; whether the names of 300 persons in Cranford and Loughkeel electoral divisions have been sent to the Local Government Board Inspector, all of whom are in extreme destitution; whether the above named electoral divisions are scheduled as congested; and what the Local Government Board intend to do in the matter?

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether in the electoral divisions of Cranford and Loughkeel, in the Milford Union, which are scheduled as congested districts, any relief works will be opened to enable the people to live through the privations they are now enduring, brought on by the failure of the potato crop and other such causes, and which threaten, if no remedial measures be adopted by the Government, to become yet more serious in a very short space of time?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board are informed by their Inspector that there is not, at present, any abnormal distress in the electoral divisions mentioned in the question. The Inspector is now making further inquiries into the condition of the people, and will report at once if any special measures require to be adopted to relieve any distress that may exist. He has also been supplied with the list of persons referred to in the question of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for East Donegal.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Local Government Board have received representations from the Guardians of Stranorlar Union, that to relieve the distress existing within it by additional poor rate would be impracticable, by reason of the poverty of the ratepayers, and that without help it is impossible for many families to subsist till harvest time, and that there are within the Union several partly formed roads which are useless in their present condition; and what answer the Local Government Board have given, or intend to give to these representations?

Mr. J. MORLEY: A Resolution of the Guardians of this Union to the effect stated has been received. The Local Government Board understand that there are a number of poor families in the Union who have suffered from the failure of the potato crop and who may require assistance shortly. At the present time, however, there are only three persons in the entire Union in receipt of out-door relief and the rates are low; and so far as the Local Government Board can see, the resources of the Poor Law should suffice to deal with any cases of distress that have arisen.

## TRAINING SHIP IN IRISH WATERS.

MR. E. M'HUGH: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Donegal (Mr. J. Mains): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if he has considered the expediency of having one of Her Majesty's training ships for boys in Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly during part of the year?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): Lough Swilly is included among the Ports which will be visited by the *Northampton* during her present cruise.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, if he can say what ship it is proposed to station for training purposes at Queenstown, and when she may be expected there?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No conclusion has yet been arrived at, as to which training ship will be stationed at Queenstown. nor of the date at which she will be sent.

## ADMIRALTY RIGHTS AT HOWTH.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, what steps will be taken by the Admiralty to preserve the right of way round the sea coast from Sutton to Howth, on which the coastguards and revenue preventive service have patrolled at all times; is he aware that a gentleman who has recently bought property at Sutton is seeking, in the Land Judges' Court, to abolish all rights of way along the coast over his land; and will the Government be represented in Court to resist any encroachments on the immemorial user of Her Majesty's officers and the public?

MR. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) asked, whether, having regard to the fact that this question of right of way was now the subject of legal proceedings, it was desirable in the interests of justice, that the matter should be the subject of discussion in this House?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Of course, it would be undesirable to discuss in this House any question which is *sub judice.* In answer to the question on the Paper, the Dublin Board of Works have been requested to take all necessary steps to preserve the Admiralty rights in the matter. No information has been received of any attempt to interfere with the coast guard using the path.

## THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS AND ALLOTMENTS.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Comptroller of the Household, as representing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whether, in accordance with the precedent set by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1894, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will consider the desirability of inquiring, by means of a Departmental Committee, into the best means of extending the facilities for the granting of agricultural allotments upon the estates under their control, and into the applicability thereto of provisions of the Local Government Act 1894, and into other like matters appertaining to the subject.

*THE COMPTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Mr. G. LEVESON-GOWER, Stoke-upon-Trent): The Estates Committee, which is charged with the management of the property under the control of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, holds its meetings weekly. For some years past it has been made known, in the parishes in which the Commissioners are possessed of agricultural property, that they are desirous of affording all reasonable facilities for the acquisition of allotments by the labouring population. A large number of allotments have been provided, and many negotiations with District and Parish Councils are pending at the present time.

MR. CYRIL DODD asked, whether similar facilities would also be afforded to small shopkeepers who often wanted allotments?

*MR. LEVESON-GOWER: That is certainly a question that will receive consideration.

## TELEGRAPH AND POSTAL FACILITIES TO LEWIS.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will state what sums have been expended each year since 1885 on telegraph extensions and increased postal facilities respectively in the Western Mainland of Ross-shire and in the Island of Lewis?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY, Nottingham, E): The information desired by the hon. Member is being prepared, and shall be communicated to him.

### ISLAND OF MATACONG.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Island of Matacong (West Coast of Africa) was ceded by Great Britain to France under a Convention made in 1882 and ratified in 1889; whether private proprietary rights over the island were at the time of cession, and had for a long time been owned by an English trading firm, to whom no notice was given of the cession, and whose representative on the island in September, 1891, was taken prisoner and taken from the island by an armed force; whether the French Government expressed their willingness to make full inquiry, and whether they have now communicated their decision as to the validity of the title of the said English firm (the proofs of which were demanded and handed in in June 1893); and, if so, what is their decision; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will indemnify the said English proprietors for the serious damage to their property and business resulting from many years' forced suspension of private proprietary rights?

SIR EDWARD GREY: By the Convention of 1882 Great Britain recognised the Island of Matacong as belonging to France. That Convention was never ratified, but has been treated by both parties as binding. Private proprietary rights over the island dating prior to 1882 are claimed by an English firm. Their representative claimed rights which were considered inconsistent with the French sovereign rights, and was removed from the island by the French Authorities. The question has been repeatedly brought before the French Government, who have stated that the validity of the titles must be proved before the local tribunals, as titles of an anterior date are said to exist, or that the question should go to arbitration. The latter alternative has been refused by the British firm. The case is not one in which an indemnity should be paid by Her Majesty's Government.

*MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Before the cession of the island was any reservation of the then existing proprietary rights made by this country?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The cession was made 20 years ago; but I will inquire into the point.

### LONDON WATER SUPPLY.

MR. J. BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the fact that many suburban consumers of water living outside the London area, and supplied by London water companies, are still without a water supply in consequence of the frost acting upon inefficiently laid mains, he would be disposed to introduce legislation affording protection to these people, or at least extending to them the right to demand an inquiry, which is at present possessed by the householders in the more central districts of the Metropolis?

MR. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE: It appears to me that the same remedies should be given to consumers outside the London area supplied by the London water companies as to those within. But, before taking any action in this direction, it will be necessary to see what is the result of the inquiries in respect of the complaints against the water companies from ratepayers within the area.

### GAS CYLINDERS.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Birmingham, Mr. J. POWELL WILLIAMS, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a recent case of death caused by the explosion of a gas cylinder at Fenchurch Street Station, and to the recommendation of the coroner's jury that gas cylinders should be subjected to a Government test, and should be stamped showing that they are capable of resisting the pressure of the gases which they contain; and whether he will take steps, in the interests of public safety and of a large and growing industry, to carry out the the recommendation of the jury?

MR. ASQUITH: I have already answered a question upon this subject, and have received a report from an expert upon the matter. I intend to invite further expert inquiry. It is reported to me as most probable that the explosion was not due to an imperfectly welded cylinder, but was caused by the ignition of an explosive mixture which no cylinder would stand, however perfectly it had been tested. I will, however, request those who are to be consulted upon this question to inquire how far the Government test would be a safeguard, and I will carefully consider the suggestion thrown out by the hon. Member.

### THE INDIAN PROCEDURE BILL.

Mr. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India with regard to the Bill called the Procedure Bill, which has recently been before the Supreme Legislative Council of India, which proposed, among other things to give the Courts power to prevent decrees for restitution of conjugal rights being enforced by the imprisonment of the wife, will he explain why the Government abandoned this clause, which was supported by many members and only opposed by three, one of whom was the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal; whether the present law that any wife in India, even though she be a child, may be imprisoned for not living with her husband has only been in force for about 18 years; and whether the Government will again introduce the proposed reform into the Supreme Legislative Council and endeavour to carry it?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds, in the absence of Mr. H. H. Fowler): This clause was unanimously struck out by a Seclect Committee of seven members, four of whom were natives of India, on the ground that the country was not yet ripe for such a change; and a motion to restore it was lost in the Legilsative Council by 15 votes to 2. Under the present law a wife cannot be imprisoned until the Court has heard and considered all objections raised by her, and I am advised that a plea of childhood, if established, would lead to the dismissal of the suit. It is the case that imprisonment in these suits was not prescribed by law until 18 years ago, but I believe that other methods, not less objectionable, of enforcing conjugal rights were in force before that time. I have no reason to think that the Government of India propose, in the circumstances which I have stated, to re-introduce the measure at present, but I have no doubt they will do so as soon as they consider that it can be passed with due regard to the state of public opinion in India.

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN STRABANE UNION.

Mr. J. A. RENTOUL (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain on what grounds the Local Government Board have sanctioned the erection of two labourers' cottages on the farm of John Finlay, Tulleyrap, in the union of Strabane, although there are already four cottier tenants living in houses on Mr. Finlay's farms, and eight farms all situated within half a mile of Mr. Finlay's farm, several of them as large as his, upon the whole of which there is a single labourer's dwelling, though there are empty labourers' houses upon four of these farms?

Mr. J. MORLEY: No scheme for the erection of labourers' cottages in the townland mentioned has yet been sanctioned by the Local Government Board. An Inspector of the Board has, however, been appointed to carry out the Acts in the Union (the Guardians having declined to do so), and I understand he contemplates making a Scheme for the erection of 13 cottages in five electoral divisions. Two of the proposed cottages are intended to be built in the townland mentioned; but before the erection of any of them can be sanctioned by the Local Government Board there must be a Local Inquiry held in the matter by another Inspector, at which all the owners and occupiers of lands proposed to be acquired will have an opportunity of offering objections to the Scheme. Of course, for any lands that may be ultimately taken, the persons interested will receive compensation, the amount of which, in case of disagreement, will be determined by an Arbitrator.

### POSTAL FACILITIES AT FINTRAY, ABERDEENSHIRE.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the fact that there is only a delivery of letters three times a week in the northern part of the parish of Fintray, situated only ten miles from Aberdeen, and close to two railways; whether frequent representations have been made to him of the grave inconvenience thereby caused; and whether, by a re-arrangement of the postal deliveries or otherwise, he will endeavour to secure to this district a daily delivery of letters?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: This is a subject to which my hon. Friend himself directed my attention in October last. I stated then that I could not sanction a more frequent delivery in the district referred to, because the revenue from the letters barely covered half the expenditure incurred. I fear the circumstances are no more favourable now, but if my hon. Friend can suggest any arrangement of the deliveries which will meet the case without materially increasing the expense, I will give the suggestion my careful consideration.

## QUARANTINE.

Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce at an early date a Bill containing such provisions as are necessary to terminate quarantine?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (who answered the question) said: A Bill is being prepared on this subject, and I hope it will be introduced shortly after Easter.

## QUINQUENNIAL CENSUS.

Sir F. S. POWELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he proposes to introduce a Bill in the course of the present Session to provide for a quinquennial census relating to the numbers of the population for the United Kingdom in the year 1896?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Government does not at present propose to introduce a Bill on this subject.

## THE NEW CODE AND SCHOOL VENTILATION.

Sir F. S. POWELL: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been directed to the inconvenience and danger to health likely to arise from the provision in Schedule VII. of the New Code for ventilation by enlarged inlets and outlets in addition to the windows; whether he is prepared to amend the article in Schedule VII., Article 11, of the Code, in order to prevent such injurious consequences; and whether, having regard to the danger arising from windows which swing, he is prepared to omit the provision in Schedule VII., Article 9 (b), which compels the construction of windows with a portion made to swing?

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): The size of the ventilators proposed is not unduly large. The teachers will of course exercise a discretion in opening and shutting windows. It is hoped the provision will be beneficial and not injurious to the children. Swing windows are generally in use in schools, and no such windows as would involve danger are contemplated under the new rule.

## THE LAND SLIP AT SANDGATE.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, if he will state why the coastguards' houses at Sandgate, which were rendered uninhabitable owing to the landslip which took place there two years ago, have neither been pulled down nor shored up; and whether steps will taken to deal with these structures without further delay?

Mr. EDWARD ROBERTSON: The delay in dealing with the houses in question arose on account of a consideration as to whether the Coastguard Station should be removed to another place. This has now been settled, and provision has been made in the Estimates for the present year for the erection of new houses.

## THE AMERICAN AND SCOTCH MAILS.

Mr. JOHN WILSON (Govan): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, having arranged a special accelerated train to carry the American mails per *Etruria* to London, he will in future arrange a similar train to convey the mails to Scotland, so that letters may be delivered in time to be answered by the outgoing steamer?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I am afraid the amount of correspondence for Scotland would scarcely warrant the establishment of a special service similar to that for London; but, apart from this, even by the employment of a special train, it would seldom be practicable to give to Scotland an interval for reply by the outgoing steamer. I may point out, however, that it is the rule to send the Scotch mails from Queenstown by the quickest practicable route, and that in some cases these mails do already benefit from the special service.

Mr. J. WILSON: Arising out of this answer, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that a very large amount of business is done by merchants in Glasgow both with America and Canada, and that it is essentially necessary they should be in possession of the earliest information possible as soon as the letters were delivered?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY believed there was a large amount of business done, but he did not think the matter was one for special arrangement.

## THE IRISH MAILS.

Mr. W. KENNY: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is now in a position to make a definite statement on the subject of the tenders for the mail contract between Dublin and Holyhead, and between Holyhead and London? May I supplement that question by asking whether the right hon. Gentleman and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have to-day received a communication from the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in which they protest against the adoption of any boats smaller than those proposed by tender No. 2, and asking the Postmaster General and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to receive a deputation?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I have got a telegram to that effect. I propose also to answer the question in the name of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin. [Mr. W. Field asked the Postmaster General whether he was in a position to make a statement regarding the mail contract *via* Queenstown, Kingstown, and Holyhead; and, whether acceleration and increased accommodation would be provided on land and sea?] I have seen the Directors of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company to-day, and they have promised to provide me with some further data showing how the amount of the tender is made up, on which they are anxious that I should obtain some technical advice. Pending the consideration of these figures, I regret to say that I am unable to make any definite announcement. I may repeat that, under any new contract, it is my desire to obtain an acceleration of half-an-hour, together with the requisite accommodation for the mails, and accommodation for passengers at least equal to that afforded in the *Ireland.* I am happy to be able to state that the special service for accelerating the Saturday American mail was successfully inaugurated on Saturday last. The new mail train arrived at Queenstown punctually at the appointed time, 6.45 a.m., and the Cunard Mail Packet was able to get away from Queenstown by ten minutes to eight, instead of about mid-day as heretofore.

Mr. W. KENNY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there is any intention to accept a tender for boats of a smaller size than those mentioned in No. 2?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I am afraid I cannot make a statement until after the decision of the Government.

Mr. W. FIELD: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman when he expects to be able to make a declaration with regard to this matter. We have had it now under consideration I do not know how many times, and we have never had any kind of a definite reply from the right hon. Gentleman. All the commercial community of Dublin and the whole of Ireland are united on this question?

Dr. KENNY (Dublin, College Green): Is not the sole matter in dispute some objections on the part of the Treasury? Are they not the only stumbling-block in the way, and cannot the right hon. Gentleman get over that stumbling-block in a matter of national importance? Will he assure the House that he will give a definite answer by the termination of the Recess?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I cannot say more than that I am most anxious to lose no time whatever in coming to a decision. There is a substantial difference between the amount offered by the company and the amount the Government is justified in giving.

Dr. KENNY: Is not the Treasury the objector. Has not the City of Dublin Steam packet Company offered to submit the whole matter to arbitration, and has not the right hon. Gentleman power to submit to arbitration in this matter?

Mr. A. MORLEY: It is a most unusual course for the Government to submit any such matter to arbitration.

Dr. KENNY: Will the right hon. Gentleman be able to give any answer to this before the Dissolution?

[Mr. A. Morley did not reply]

## EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether any and, if so, what steps have been taken to make thoroughly sound and effective the existing movement in favour of evening continuation schools; and whether, following the precedent set with so much success by the Science and Art Department, he will consider and arrange for the appointment of a person or persons thoroughly competent and specially experienced to advise local educational authorities, especially in rural districts, as to the economical and effective organisation and working of evening continuation schools?

Mr. ACLAND: The Department is most anxious to make evening continuation schools as sound and effective as possible in every way. Her Majesty's Inspectors are always ready to advise local authorities as to the organisation and working of such schools. I do not think that the necessity has arisen for a special staff of officials devoting themselves entirely to this branch of the work of the Department.

## EXAMINATION OF ACTING TEACHERS.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he can state the date of the last certificate examination for acting teachers and for college trained teachers; the date of the issue of the results of the examination so far as college-trained teachers are concerned; and the date of the issue of the results so far as acting teachers are concerned; and whether he can in any way compensate the acting teachers for the prolonged anxiety and injustice consequent on this differential delay of more than five weeks?

*Dr. Kenny.*

Mr. ACLAND: The examination was held from December 10th to 14th, and the result, so far as the colleges were concerned, was announced on the 21st February. The acting teachers were informed of the result of their examination from March 27th to April 3rd. The work on the acting teachers' examination is much more laborious than that on the students', and the difference between the dates of announcement is generally about a month. There has been nothing exceptional on this occasion, in the difference of date, which is really unavoidable.

## THE PROPOSED VETERINARY COLLEGE IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. KENNY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what progress has been made in carrying out steps for the establishment of a Veterinary College in Ireland; and, if an Act of Parliament be necessary for the purpose, when does he propose to introduce it?

Mr. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will introduce a Bill this Session to provide the promised £15,000 to start the Veterinary College in Dublin?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The draft charter for the proposed Veterinary College in Dublin has been settled, and is now before the Law Officers for approval. Upon the incorporation of the governing body a Bill will be introduced forthwith to provide the proposed grant-in-aid.

## GOVERNMENT OF HAWAII.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can inform the House what now represents the Government of Hawaii: and, whether the existing Government, in the event of there being one, is recognised by Her Majesty's Government?

Sir EDWARD GREY: The present Government of Hawaii is Republican. The Republic was recognised by Her Majesty's Government on the 15th of November last.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY CODE.

Mr. P. J. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the police code, published in 1881, with Amendments up to date, is the manual placed in the hands of recruits to the London police force, he would have any objection to the publication of the Royal Irish Constabulary Code by a member of that body?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The publication referred to in the first part of the question is, I presume, that which deals with the general principles of police duty. It is not the code of the London police, which, as I stated yesterday, is a confidential publication. The Royal Irish Constabulary have also in their hands a manual of police duty, and, for reasons explained by me yesterday, I see no sufficient reason for consenting to the Constabulary Code being made available for public use.

Mr. KENNEDY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the book to which I have referred was published in 1881 by the then Director of the Criminal Investigation Department in London?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am not aware of anything of the kind.

Mr. KENNEDY: Might I inform the right hon. Gentleman that the book is in the Library?

## LANDED ESTATES COURTS CONVEYANCES.

Mr. R. M. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the result of his communication with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland respecting the execution of Landed Estates Courts conveyances?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor informs me that arrangements have been made under which the Master of the Rolls will execute any conveyances in the Land Judge's Court that may be presented to him for execution.

## SURGEON MAJOR GENERALS IN INDIA.

Mr. R. W. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether it is the fact that the pay of Surgeon Major Generals in India is reduced, from 1st April last, from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 2,000 per month; and, if so, whether such reduction will be followed by diminished duties and responsibilities on the part of these officers; and whether it is proposed to reduce the pay of officers of corresponding rank in India at the same time and on a similar scale?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: The number of the principal medical officers in India has been increased from three to five, the responsibilities of all, except the Surgeon Major General at headquarters have thus been reduced, and their pay is diminished accordingly. It is not proposed to reduce the pay of officers of corresponding rank in India.

## SECOND DIVISION CLERKS IN DUBLIN.

Mr. L. P. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is now in a position to give the information recently asked for regarding the promotion of second division clerks in the Dublin offices?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: In accordance with my promise in reply to the hon. Member's question of the 12th March, I have had a statement prepared which I shall be happy to hand to him.

## THE CONVICT M'CANN.

Mr. W. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet arrived at a decision regarding the release of M'Cann, an Irish political prisoner, who has been 12 years in prison, and is now 70 years of age?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have decided, with the concurrence of the Secretary for Scotland, that in consideration of this convict's age and feeble state of health, he may now be released on licence.

## COMMISSARY BAKERIES.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will insert in the tender forms about to be issued for Ireland a similar clause to that inserted for the commissary bakeries at Aldershot, Shorncliffe, &c., in England, that tenders would be only accepted from millers, thereby insuring the supply of home-manufactured flour?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Woodall, Hanley): The same form of tender is now in use for flour, both in England and Ireland, the stipulation as to millers having been withdrawn from the English form.

**Mr. FIELD**: Am I to understand that the Irish millers tender for the supply the same as they do in England?

**Mr. WOODALL**: Precisely the same form of tender is issued in both cases.

**Mr. FIELD**: Am I to understand that there is a new form of tender which boycotts the native producer from tendering to supply ships in Ireland or England?

**Mr. WOODALL**: Millers take exactly the same position as others.

**Mr. FIELD**: May I ask what that position is?

**Mr. WOODALL**: I think my hon. Friend will perfectly understand my answer when he sees it in print.

## AN OCEAN DERELICT.

**Mr. J. C. MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether intelligence has been received from Madrid that a large sailing vessel has been seen abandoned near the Straits of Gibraltar, about seven miles off Tangier, right in the course taken generally by vessels of our fleet when going to and from the Mediterranean; and whether he will order a cruiser from England or the Mediterranean and Channel Squadron at once to search for this dangerous derelict and bring it to port or destroy it?

**Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON**: No Report respecting this wreck has been received from Madrid. In the *Shipping Gazette* of April 5th, it is stated that the Spanish steamer *Joaquin Velasjo* reports having passed a vessel waterlogged and abandoned, foremast only visible, in the position stated, which is not in the ordinary track. Where the vessel (if it is a vessel and not a spar, which is equally probable from the Report) is now, it is difficult to say, but if not on shore, or at the bottom, the strong currents have probably taken her into the Mediterranean. No search could be made with any prospect of success unless further Reports are received.

## REFUSAL TO ALLOW A MEETING IN COUNTY CORK.

**Mr. W. REDMOND** (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will explain upon what authority, and for what reason, the police refused to allow a public meeting to be held at Grenagh, County Cork, upon last Sunday.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The placard convening the meeting pointedly referred to the taking of a farm from which the late tenant (who was named) had been evicted, and it was believed that the meeting, if held at the place originally selected, would have an intimidatory effect, and might lead to a breach of the peace. It was decided, therefore, not to allow it in the neighbourhood of the farm in question.

**Mr. W. REDMOND** asked whether the promoters of the meeting had any notice of the intention of the Government?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: Yes, Sir, the district inspector is specially directed to inform the promoters some time before the meeting of the intention, and the information was given to them that the meeting would not be allowed.

## DUBLIN SCIENCE AND ART MUSEUM.

**Mr. W. KENNY**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he is aware that the duties and responsibilities of the Director of the Science and Art Museum at Dublin have vastly increased since his appointment to that office in the year 1883, and that the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Presidents and Vice Presidents of the Committee of Council on Education have, at various times, recorded their opinions that the salary enjoyed by the Director is inadequate; whether the last specific application for an increase of salary made by the Director, by his letter of 29th October 1894, has been considered by the Treasury; and, if so, with what result; and, would there be any objection to lay upon the Table a copy of the correspondence on the subject of this salary?

**Sir JOHN HIBBERT**: The Treasury has received more than one application for an increase in the salary of the Director of the Museum, the last was in August 1894. After full inquiry the Treasury was of opinion that the emoluments—amounting to £760 a year—afford not inadequate remuneration for the duties of the post. The manner in which the present Director has discharged his duties has been recognised by the grant of the honour of a Companionship of the Bath. I cannot consent to lay on the Table departmental correspondence relative to the salaries of Civil Service Appointments.

### THE WEXFORD AND DUBLIN MAIL.

**Mr. P. FFRENCH** (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, whether he is aware that the night mail between Wexford and Dublin leaves Dublin at 8 o'clock p.m., and often does not arrive in Wexford until 7.30 or 8 o'clock next morning, thereby delaying the rural postmen, and causing immense inconvenience to the public generally; and, whether he will look into the matter and see if a uniform service is possible?

**Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY**: No representations on the subject have reached me; but I will have inquiry made with the object of securing greater regularity, should the circumstances require it.

### MADAGASCAR.

**Sir E. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT** (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether Her Majesty's Government have made any provision to enable British subjects in Madagascar to leave the island if they so desire during the French invasion.

**Sir EDWARD GREY**: No special provision is required. British Consular Officers are at the two principal ports, and will protect those who may come to the coast. No intimation has been received of the wish of British residents to leave except in the case of some British Indians at Mojunga to whom the French Authorities offered facilities.

### UPPER NILE WATERWAY.

**Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take to secure the control of the Upper Nile Waterway?

**Sir E. GREY**: It is impossible to make a statement on this subject in answer to a question.

**Sir E. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT** desired to know whether the French Government had informed Her Majesty's Government that no expedition had been sent to the Nile.

**Sir E. GREY**: I have nothing to add to what has been already said.

### DENBIGH ASYLUM.

**Mr. J. H. ROBERTS**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has considered the views of the deputation which waited upon him, on 20th February last, in reference to the enlargement of Denbigh Asylum; and whether he is in a position to state his decision?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: My decision is, that the additional accommodation needed is to be provided by the enlargement of the existing Asylum at Denbigh.

### ELECTION OF OVERSEERS AT BOOTLE.

**Mr. J. KEIR HARDIE** (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that on 1st April a meeting of the Vestry of Bootle was held to elect overseers of the poor, at which four ratepayers were duly elected at the meeting; whether he is also aware that the magistrates refused to accept the names so put forward, and elected four others which had not been before the Vestry meetings; whether this was a contravention of the Local Government Act; and what action he proposes to take in the matter?

**Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE**: The only information I have on this subject is contained in the letter which my hon. Friend has been good enough to send me. It rests with the magistrates to appoint the overseers, and they are under no legal obligation to elect persons nominated by the Vestry. Under the Local Government Act, the power of appointing overseers in urban parishes may be transferred to the Urban District Council on their application.

### A PROFESSIONAL CORONER'S JURY.

**Mr. J. KEIR HARDIE**: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Corporation of Bootle has been paying a professional coroner's jury for two years past, at a cost of over £200; and whether this is a legal payment; if not, whether he has power to interfere to protect the ratepayers against such charges?

**Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE**: I have no information as to this matter, nor any power to interfere with regard to it. The accounts of Municipal Corporations are not subject to control by the Local Government Board or their officers.

### INSPECTOR RUFF, METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department—(1) whether his attention has been called to the case of Inspector Ruff, of the Metropolitan Police Force, in Islington, who was reduced in rank about a year since, some six months before he was entitled to retire on a full pension; (2) whether Mr. Ruff had since retired and been awarded a pension on the scale of his salary during the few months that had passed since he was reduced in rank, instead of on the average pay that he had received during the last three years of his service in the force; (3) whether the right hon. Gentleman has taken the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown on the legality of this action; and (4) whether he will give orders that the question of Mr. Ruff's pension be reconsidered in accordance with what is understood to be the usual practice?

Mr. ASQUITH: The answer to the first three paragraphs is in the affirmative. I am in communication with the Law Officers on the subject, and hope to decide the matter at an early date.

### DUBLIN AND GARRISTOWN RAILWAY.

Mr. J. J. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet come to any decision regarding the request made to him by the deputation which waited upon him last winter for public assistance in the matter of the proposed Dublin and Garristown Railway?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I communicated with the Board of Works in the matter of this projected railway, and was informed that the funds for meeting the State Guarantee under the Act of 1883 were exhausted. The Grand Jury of Meath, at Spring Assizes, 1894, decided not to express approval of the proposed railway, at any rate until the Grand Jury of the County of Dublin, who were mainly concerned in the matter, had expressed their opinion as to the project; and, in the June following, the Grand Jury of the County Dublin expressed disapproval of the line and refused to guarantee.

Mr. CLANCY asked, whether it was not the case that every fact the right hon. Gentleman had stated now was stated to him by the deputation mentioned in the question?

Mr. J. MORLEY replied, that the facts were mentioned to him by the deputation. What he promised the deputation was, that he would inquire whether there were funds. Until and unless Parliament provided due funds the Government cannot further the hon. Member's object.

Mr. CLANCY: Has the right hon. Gentleman any intention of asking Parliament to provide the funds?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not believe the present would be a very auspicious moment.

### DISTRESS IN ST. OLAVE'S UNION.

Mr. J. C. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to the fact that the relieving officers of St. Olave's Union have been giving 3s. 6d. per day, half in cash half in kind, in out-relief (nominal stone breaking) to over 60,000 persons without the inquiry by the guardians whether they were deserving cases as required by law; and what steps he proposes taking to rectify this?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have made inquiry on this subject. Owing to the distress which prevailed in the St. Olave's Union in January last, the guardians opened a labour yard. I am informed that during the first few days the yard was open, the number of applicants was so great that the officers of the guardians were unable to make proper inquiries as to the cases; but a special meeting of the guardians was then held, and arrangements were effected whereby the usual inquiries were duly made. The yard was closed on the 28th March, the total number of persons set to work there having been, not 60,000, as stated in the question, but 3,910. The total number of days' work done was about 60,000. The subject has been fully inquired into by the Committee on the Unemployed.

### COLLAPSE OF A TUNNEL.

Mr. E. SPENCER (West Bromwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether, having regard to the extraordinary collapse of a portion of a tunnel at Guildford on the London and South Western Railway on Friday, the

22nd of March, any steps, and, if so, what, are taken by the Board of Trade, or otherwise, to periodically ascertain as to the safety of tunnels on railways; and whether the Board of Trade will, at an early date, hold a more formal investigation as to the causes of such collapse, and of the circumstances attending the same, as provided in the Railway Regulation Amendment Act, 34 and 35 Vic., c. 78, s. 7?

Mr. J. AIRD (Paddington, N.) asked, whether it was not the fact that the South Western Railway were able, by their exertions, to reopen the line in eight days after the accident occurred?

Mr. BRYCE: It was opened very soon, though I am not prepared to state the exact time. As regards the question on the Paper, the duty is not devolved upon the Board of Trade of making periodical inspections of the permanent way of railways. That is a responsibility which rests on the railway companies themselves. As at present advised, I see no reason for thinking that the causes of the accident have been insufficiently ascertained by Major Marindin, the Inspecting Officer, whose Report I have only just received to-day, but have not yet had time to peruse.

### LOCAL REGISTRATION OF TITLE ACT.

Mr. R. M. DANE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, have any complaints been received by that body respecting the want of office accommodation by the local registrars under the Local Registration of Title Act; and what steps, if any, the Treasury intend taking in the matter?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: No such complaints have reached me. Applications from Local Registering Authorities for the expenses of carrying into effect the Local Registration of Title Act are dealt with by the Board of Works, subject to appeal to the Treasury, and no such appeals have reached the latter.

### THE WAR BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether he can have drawn up and presented to this House a Report on the naval experiences in the recent war between China and Japan which can make public all such facts and lessons as can be published without prejudice to our naval interests?

Mr. ROBERTSON: The Reports prepared in the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty on such subjects as are indicated in the question are of a confidential nature, and are designed for the information of the Board of Admiralty. There is no intention of presenting any such Reports to the House of Commons.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL asked, whether the hon. Gentleman could answer the question, which particularly excluded matter which could not be published without prejudice?

Mr. ROBERTSON: There are no others, I understand.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) wished to know whether any of the chief features of these actions would be issued in the form of a confidential Report to Captains of ships in commission?

Mr. ROBERTSON: I must ask notice of that question.

### H.M.S. "SHARPSHOOTER."

Mr. W. CODDINGTON (Blackburn): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the amount of coal consumed by the *Sharpshooter* during her 30 hours' trial; and what was her indicated horse power at that time?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: The amount of coal consumed by the *Sharpshooter* during her 30 hours' trial was 74 tons. The average indicated horse power during the trial was 2,326. Superior results have since been obtained with further experience.

### COMMISSIONERS OF INLAND REVENUE.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will instruct the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to include in their annual Report the particulars which are set forth in the notice of Motion standing on the Paper this day?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby) said, I have no doubt that full particulars of the operation of the new death duties will be given in the annual Report of the Inland Revenue, but I cannot undertake that the statistics will be in the precise form set forth in the Motion of the hon. Member.

**Mr. R. G. WEBSTER** (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he proposes bringing in a Bill this Session for triennial Parliaments?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER**: No, Sir. Her Majesty's Government have no such intention. I do not know that we should have time to pass the Bill.

**Mr. R. G. WEBSTER** pressed the right hon. Gentleman to say whether the Government proposed to maintain the Septennial Act throughout the whole course of this Parliament.

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER**: That is a large question, Sir. Time is not always at the disposal of the Government.

## DR. HERZ.

**Mr. A. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN** (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether any steps have yet been taken to procure the return of Dr. Herz, who for over two years now has been under arrest, and is lying seriously ill at Bournemouth; and, if not, whether the Government propose to take any steps, either by negotiation with the French Government or otherwise.

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I may point out that the "arrest" of Dr. Herz consists simply in the presence of a police officer in the hotel where he is lying ill, and every precaution is taken to secure that there shall be no avoidable inconvenience or annoyance to Dr. Herz and those who are attending on him. We are in communication with the French Government with the view of putting an end, if possible, to the existing situation, and I hope that an agreement upon the subject may soon be arrived at.

## LIGHT RAILWAYS.

**Mr. J. H. ROBERTS**: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is his intention to introduce the Bill to facilitate the construction of light railways at an early date.

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** said, it was the intention of the Government to introduce this Bill at an early date.

## THE SLAVE TRADE.

**Mr. R. A. YERBURGH** (Chester): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is aware that an anti-slavery memorial has been forwarded to the Prime Minister from the Wesleyan Methodist body, assembled in their quarterly meeting, appealing to the Government to suppress the Slave Trade in its possessions under its East African Protectorate; And, whether, seeing that it is laid down by all authorities that, as is pointed out in the memorial, one of the most effective methods of destroying the Slave Trade is to make railways, the Government will, as soon as the negotiations with the British East Africa Company are completed, proceed with the construction of a railway from Mombasa to Lake Victoria Nyanza.

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER**: When the transactions with the East Africa Company are completed that question will be carefully considered by the Government.

## PRISON CLERKSHIPS.

**Mr. C. SHAW** (Stafford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether the fee charged to candidates for prison clerkships has been reduced from £3 to £1 because it has been found that the former amount was fixed too high upon the scale published in the *London Gazette* of 9th September 1879; and, if so, how is it proposed to compensate those clerks who paid the higher fee for the loss of prospects held out to them as candidates.

**Sir JOHN HIBBERT**: Candidates before 1891 paid a fee of £3 because there were posts in the Department of the maximum value of £400 and upwards to which they could be promoted without further certificate. This rule still holds good for such clerks. There has been no loss of prospects, and there can be no question of compensation. In 1891 the fee was reduced to £1, because clerks since appointed cannot be promoted to the higher posts without the issue of a fresh certificate and the payment of a fresh fee.

## SCHOOL BOARD RATE.

**Mr. ARCHIBALD GROVE** (West Ham, N.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, pending a general re-adjustment of the incidence of the School Board Rate, he could advise the extension of Clause 97 of the Education Act, 1870, by which poor localities with an exceptionally low rateable value are relieved from the Consolidated Fund?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): This is a matter which would involve legislation. Pending the inquiry which is being made in the Department on this subject, I am not able to say whether the extension of this clause can be recommended.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question, of which I have given him private notice, with regard to the position of the Factories Bill, which is the sixth item of Government business on the Paper to-day. It is whether on the last occasion when he was publicly asked in the House whether it would be taken before Easter, in order that it might be referred to the Standing Committee, the right hon. Gentleman stated that it would be taken to-day, and whether it is now intended that the three Scotch Bills and the Light Railways Bill should stand before it?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: It is quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman has stated, that I had the expectation and the intention of putting the Factories Bill down for to-night. But we will put it down as the first order on the Monday the House reassembles. No time will in that way be lost; the Bill will be as far forward as if the Second Reading had been taken to-day.

Mr. G. J. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can state now on what day the Budget will be taken?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: The day I should fix, though I do not wish to be finally bound to it, would be Thursday, May 2nd.

Mr. G. J. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Will the right hon. Gentleman make arrangements to secure the First Reading of the Crofters Bill to-night?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: As far as I am concerned, certainly.

Mr. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what will be the second and third orders on the day on which the House meets? In the event of the Crofters Bill and the other Scotch Bills not being reached to-night, will they come on as a matter of course?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Our object is to proceed as much as possible with Bills which may be considered non-controversial. I should, therefore, propose after the Factories Bill, to take such Bills, for instance, as the Fatal Accidents (Scotland) Bill, which, I believe, is non-contentious, the Truck Acts Amendment Bill, and the Coal Mines Bill.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Fatal Accidents (Scotland) Bill will be opposed, and will he take into consideration the fact that in order to be in their places on Monday Scotch Members will have to leave their homes on Saturday?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: We feel that Scotch business is a good deal in arrear, and therefore we are bound to do what we can to forward it, even at the risk of some inconvenience which I am afraid may be caused to hon. Members.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll): Will the right hon. Gentleman stop the discussion on the Naval Works Bill at 11 o'clock to-night in order to enable the Crofters Bill to be taken?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I should very much hope that the discussion will stop before that time, and that there will be plenty of time to introduce the Crofters Bill.

Sir D. MACFARLANE: If the discussion should continue, will the right hon. Gentleman suspend it?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: It is very necessary to get the Second Reading of the Naval Works Bill to-night.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman without inconvenience tell us what business he proposes to take on the Thursday after the meeting of Parliament?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have been asked by the late Secretary to the Admiralty to give an opportunity on Vote 8 of the Naval Estimates for a discussion of the question of boilers, and though I cannot pledge myself at this time, my contemplation is that we might give such an opportunity on the Thursday after the meeting of the House.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) asked whether the Coal Mines Bill was likely to be distributed to Members to-day or to-morrow. Last night it was not printed.

MR. ASQUITH: It will be in the hands of the Members to-morrow.

### NEW WRIT.

New Writ issued for the City of Oxford *v.* the late Sir G. Chesney.—*(Mr. Akers-Douglas.)*

### THE EASTER ADJOURNMENT.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER Moved, "That this House, at its rising to-morrow, do adjourn until Monday, April 22nd."

Motion agreed to.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby), rose, amid general cheers, to move, first:—

> "That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than 11 years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and of his uniform urbanity which have secured for him the respect and esteem of this House."

And, secondly:—

> "That an humble Address be presented to her Majesty that she will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of her Royal favour upon the right hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House; and to assure her Majesty that whatever expense her Majesty shall think proper to be incurred upon that account, this House will make good the same."

He said: Sir,—When 11 years ago the House of Commons, with a happy prescience, invited you to occupy that Chair you addressed us in memorable words, which made a deep impression at the time, and which those who heard them have not forgotten and will not forget. You said:—

> "I know how necessary it is for any man who aspires to fill up that great office to lay aside all that is personal, all that is of party, all that savours of political predilection, and to subordinate everything to the great interests of the House at large to maintain not only the written law, but, if I may say so, that unwritten law which should appeal to, as it always does appeal to, the minds and consciences of the gentlemen of the House of Commons, to promote and to hand on unimpaired the traditions of this House, and over and above all its most cherished and inestimable traditions —I mean, Sir, that personal courtesy, that interchange of chivalry between Member and Member, which I believe to be compatible with the most effective party debates and feelings, and which, I am sure, is one of the oldest and, I humbly trust, may always be the most cherished tradition of this great representative assembly."

[*Cheers.*] We are here to-day, to bear witness that these honourable pledges you have most honourably fulfilled. [*Loud cheers.*] It has been said, and truly said, that in no other country is there anything that corresponds to the position of the Speaker of the English House of Commons. It is without an exact parallel anywhere. What is it we require of a Speaker? They are qualities not common in their single excellence; most rare in their happy combination. We expect dignity and authority, tempered by urbanity and kindness; firmness to control and persuasiveness to counsel; promptitude of decision and justness of judgment; tact, patience, and firmness; a natural superiority combined with an inbred courtesy, so as to give by his own bearing an example and a model to those over whom he presides; an impartial mind, a tolerant temper, and a reconciling disposition; accessible to all in public and private as a kind and a prudent counsellor. These are high and exacting demands, and in you, Sir, we have found them all fulfilled. [*Loud cheers.*] No one who has not spent his nights and days in the House of Commons can estimate the weight of the public care which falls upon the Speaker, the perpetual labour and the constant anxiety of that great post. The changes which have been made in our procedure during your term of office, have added greatly to its responsibilities. The real authority of the Speaker rests absolutely on the confidence of the House [*Cheers.*] That confidence you have earned, and that authority you have exercised to your high honour and our great advantage. [*Cheers.*] You have won from all the meed, not only of reverence and respect, but of esteem and affection—[*cheers*]—and the severance of the ties which have bound you to this House and this House to you is to us a subject of poignant and of lasting regret. We know well that the weighty duties of your office makes great demands, not only upon mental power, but physical resource. It is with deep regret we learn that your strength is no longer equal to the strain. We trust that on your retirement from that chair you will still have many years of future happiness and health—[*loud cheers*]—which we feel assured will still be given to public usefulness and your country's good. As we shall cherish the recollection of the services which you have rendered, it will be a satisfaction to you to know that those services are duly valued by this great Assembly, of which you have been so long the chief and the ornament. You will feel in the days that are to come, that you have added fame to a name among the most illustrious in the annals of the House of Commons—[*loud cheers*]—and that you have exalted the dignity of a station the highest to which an English gentleman can be called It has been said that the memory of the departed who have deserved well of their country is a possession for ever, and the House of Commons, when you have left it, will enshrine the record of your Speakership among its purest and its noblest traditions. [*Loud and prolonged cheers.*]—The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Resolution.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester E.): Mr. Speaker,—The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has moved in the customary form of words our sense of the great services which you have rendered to this House, and in associating myself with him by seconding the resolution I feel that I am only expressing sentiment which every one of my hearers feels, that never before has this ancient formula been charged with such an amount of feeling as it is charged with on the present occasion. [*Loud cheers.*] We are going through no formal or merely complimentary ceremony this afternoon, but we are expressing from the very depths of our hearts feelings which far transcend the powers of expression which we may possess, and which, if they could be expressed, would hardly be fitting for an occasion of this kind. Sir, as the Leader of the House has just reminded us, you have held office during a period in which the future fate, as I think, of this House hung in the balance. The 11 years during which you have held office have been years of great change in this Assembly. There has been in those 11 years one great Reform Bill passed, the greatest Reform Bill since the Reform Bill of 1832; there have been great changes in the constitution of Parties; there have been questions mooted among us which have raised, necessarily raised, to fever heat Party passion; and, above all, there have been changes in our rules which have thrown upon you, Sir, responsibilities shared by none of your predecessors. [*Cheers.*] Sir, the Administration which proposed those changes and the House which accepted them were deeply conscious at the time that they were taking upon themselves no light responsibility, and were, it might be, in their desire to increase the efficiency of this Assembly, throwing upon the holder of your office a weight which it was impossible to bear; and many were the prophecies, made in no pessimistic spirit, that it would be impossible in the future for the Speaker to be, as he had ever been in the past, the impartial mouthpiece not of one Party only, but of the sense of the House taken as a whole. Sir, those prophecies have not been fulfilled. [*Cheers.*] Through the great qualities which you have displayed that crisis in our history has been safely passed, and I trust that no similar crisis is ever likely to arise, for it has been given to you, Sir, to show in the Chair that kind of authority which no rules and no privileges can give, which cannot be conferred even by the support of the House, but which must be inborn in the man who exercises it—[*cheers*]—and which shows the kind of genius appropriate to the great place which you fill. May it, Sir, be our lot in the future to find men, as in turn each holder of the Chair resigns his office, who, I will not say will equal you, but who will approach you at all events in the exercise of this incommunicable gift. [*Cheers.*] I cannot sit down without adding to this testimony of the great public service which you have rendered the expression of the personal feeling of grief which animates us all at the inevitable severance now so near. [*Cheers.*] For it will be said of you, Sir, not merely that you have occupied a great place in the long line of illustrious Speakers, perhaps the greatest place for many generations past—[*cheers*]—but it will also be said of you that each individual Member of the House found in you a kind and considerate guide—[*cheers*]—and that you carried with you in your retirement not merely the respect and the admiration of all who have watched your great career, but also the love and the affection of every single Member of that great Assembly whose interests you have served so well. [*Loud and prolonged cheering.*]

Mr. SPEAKER put the Resolution formally.

Mr. J. M'CARTHY (Longford, N.), who was received with cheers, said: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Irish Nationalist colleagues in this House and for myself, I desire to say that we associate ourselves most gladly with the well-earned tribute which the House of Commons is about to offer to you for your splendid services in the Speaker's Chair. [" Hear, hear."] We cannot but remember at a time like this, and if we could have forgotten it your own words yesterday would have recalled to our memory that when you first mounted the Speaker's chair it was what you yourself in a most expressive phrase yesterday called a time of " storm and stress." It was a time of storm and stress for you; still more perhaps for myself and for my colleagues. But we have learned to know each other better since that time, and I am now glad to say, proud to say, on behalf of all my friends in this House, that we recognise your absolute impartiality [*loud cheers*], as well as all the many other exalted qualities which you have displayed in the Speaker's Chair. Many and many of us have had to consult you on questions of order and to appeal to you for counsel and guidance, and we have always been received by you in the kindliest fashion, and have been given the most willing advice. We have been received by you as comrades, if I may adopt your own enchanting expression in your speech yesterday. [*Cheers.*] Mr. Speaker, you were born to an illustrious name; you have added to that name a new and peculiar lustre. [*Cheers.*] I will only say, speaking for all the Nationalist Members for whom I am entitled to speak, that every Nationalist Irishman in this House will remember your past with the highest honour, and offers to you now the most cordial wishes for your future. [*Loud cheers.*]

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I desire to add two or three words only, and I wish to do so lest silence should possibly be misconstrued, and lest it should be thought that any party, or any section of any party, in this House was indifferent to the services which you, Sir, have rendered or ungrateful to you for them. My friends and myself accept most willingly the words that have fallen from the leader of the House and the leader of the Opposition as our spokesman on this occasion, and we desire to associate ourselves with all that they have said. We recognise with them that the functions of the Chair will have been exercised in recent times in circumstances of increasing difficulty, anxiety, and labour. As had been said by the Leader of the House, these circumstances have called for the manifestations of great qualities, the possession of any one of which in its highest degree would be unusual, but the combination of all of which could hardly have been expected from a single personality. [*Cheers.*] Sir, I think it is the universal sense of this House that you have shown that remarkable combination [" Hear, hear !"], and that you have accompanied it with unfailing kindness to all of us who have, at any time, found it necessary to seek your assistance and advice. [" Hear, hear ! "] We feel that you have added lustre to the great position you have occupied. We deeply regret your retirement, and we earnestly trust that you may have before you many years of happiness in which you may enjoy your well-earned and well-deserved repose. [*Loud cheers.*]

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I trust that the House will not consider it out of place on my part if I ask its permission to add just two or three words to what has already been said in support of this resolution. [*Cheers.*] It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the real value of this resolution largely depends upon the absolute unanimity with which it will be passed. [" Hear, hear ! "] The character of this House has of recent times undergone one remarkable change. Instead of two great parties only existing in the State, to-day this Assembly consists of many sections of many groups of Members with many individual aims and distinct interests of their own. This resolution will, indeed, be a high tribute to the absolute impartiality of the Chair if it receives, as it will receive, the hearty support of every Member of every section in the House. [*Cheers.*] I belong to, I believe, the smallest group of Members in this House, and on their behalf I desire to be permitted to associate myself with all that has been said in support of this Motion. The authority and impartiality of the Chair are the property of the House at large; they are the guarantee of its continued power and influence in the State; they are in a special manner the safeguard of the minorities—[" Hear, hear ! "]—and the smaller the minority may be the more need there is for the strong and impartial hand which will protect them from the despotism of majorities and safeguard them in the exercise of their just rights and privileges. [" Hear, hear ! "] You, Mr. Speaker, yesterday spoke of having presided over this Assembly during many Sessions, some of them, as we have been reminded, of storm and of stress. It was my fortune to sit as a Member of this House during all those Sessions, and I cannot help remembering that during the whole of that time I sat here as a Member of a Party which was in a minority, and during a considerable portion of that time as a Member of a Party which was in a very small minority indeed. I cannot help remembering also that the storms to which you alluded were storms which raged round the Party to which I belonged, and the cause which I was advocating. Sir, I recognise also that in the past we have more than once been forced by our conception of our duty to utter what seemed a jarring note in the deliberations of this House, and to take action which undoubtedly was distasteful to the sentiments of the majority of its Members. But, looking back now, as I do, over all those years, I can truthfully say it is my belief that on all these occasions, and under every circumstance of excitement and unpopularity in this House we met with, from you, uniform courtesy and impartiality. [*Cheers.*] The alteration in the procedure of this House put into the hands of the Speaker a new and enormous power. That power, we believe, has been used by you invariably for the protection of the just rights of minorities, and for the maintenance of freedom of debate. [*Cheers.*] I venture most humbly to express the belief that, should it ever come to pass that the great office of Speaker of the House of Commons should be degraded to the level of a mere partisan office to be scrambled for by successive party majorities in successive Parliaments, not only would the power and prestige of the House of Commons suffer, but those who would suffer most would be those small minorities who must, in the nature of things, look for protection to a strong and impartial occupant of the Chair. [*Cheers.*] Sir, as a Member of one of those small minorities, I desire to express our deep regret at your resignation of the high office that you have elevated and adorned, our gratitude to you for your unfailing courtesy and fairness to us in many troubled times in the past, and our sincere hope that you may for many years to come enjoy the rewards of your laborious and honourable services. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. D. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): In the peculiar position in which I am placed here I offer to you, Mr. Speaker, my most sincere and heartfelt gratitude for all the kindness and helpful counsel you have always extended to me. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. SPEAKER addressed the House as followeth, all the Members being uncovered : I am greatly honoured and deeply touched by the speeches which have been delivered in moving and seconding the Resolution now before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. I am not less touched and honoured by the speeches which have been delivered by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Longford, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford City, and by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Finsbury. It was my duty yesterday to give such expression as I could to the emotions which were aroused within me by my imminent retirement from this Chair. The fewest words, perhaps, will best befit me to-day. If I use only conventional language in returning thanks for the honour which you do me—which the whole House has done me—[*Cheers*]—I hope it will be believed that there underlies that merely conventional language a deep and abiding sense of gratitude to this House—a deep acknowledgment of that personal kindness, I would say, which has been shown to me from all quarters of the House—a kindness the expression of which adds perhaps to the poignancy of my feelings and accentuates my regret on leaving the Chair, but the memory of which will after a short time mitigate, I am sure, to me the inevitable pain of parting. [*Cheers.*] I desire respectfully to thank you. [*Loud Cheers.*]

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER : I beg to move that it be entered in the Journals of the House that this motion was carried *nemine contradicente.* [*Cheers.*] I also have to move that—

> "The thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for what he has said to the House, and that the same be printed in the Votes of this day and entered on the Journals of the House."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR formally seconded the Motion.

Motion agreed to unanimously.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER : I have now, Sir, to make the second Motion which stands on the paper, namely—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying Her Majesty that she will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of her Royal favour upon the Right Honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House ; and to assure Her Majesty that, whatever expense Her Majesty shall think proper to be incurred upon that account, this House will make good the same."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR : I beg to second that.

Motion carried unanimously amid loud cheers.

## NAVAL WORKS BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill,

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, the Bill that they had in their hands dealt entirely with the great works which were being carried out in connection with the needs of the Navy. They were concerned with the new works at Gibraltar and Portland, and also a certain number of important matters of another character, such as the alteration of some of the larger dockyards. He thought that, so far as the works at home were concerned, the judgment of the Admiralty was sound in what they proposed to do. He thought the alterations and additions to Portland were of greater importance than the proposals as to the harbour at Dover. It was not necessary to enter into the question as to whether these strategical matters were desirable ; no one who had given any attention to the matter would dispute that we must have large harbours for our men of war equipped against the attack of torpedo boats, and that was at the bottom of these proposals. He could not help thinking that Portland, excellent harbour as it was, lay a long way to the east, and experience seemed to show that it would be very essential to have some harbour westward of it. Plymouth Harbour was, of course, largely closed in by the Breakwater ; but the entrances to Plymouth Sound were now extremely large, and would, he thought, constitute a danger in time of war. The distance between the north end of Plymouth Breakwater and the nearest point of the shore was nearly half a mile, and the distance was nearly the same on the south side; and although this considerable entrance was not available to large ships, it was available to torpedo boats, and he would very much like to know from the Civil Lord if this matter had been under consideration at the Admiralty, and whether the necessity of a harbour secure against torpedo boats further westward than Portland had been considered. In regard to Gibraltar, during past years two schemes had been proposed very like that now unfolded to them, and one of these was, that a harbour should be made on the east side of the rock. It was fair to assume that the Admiralty had come to their present conclusion after careful consideration. He pointed out, however, that during recent years the range of guns had enormously increased, and a distance of four or five miles could be covered by every modern gun. The consequence was, that if two or three guns were put up on the hills at a distance of four miles, undoubtedly they could throw shells into the harbour that was to be constructed at Gibraltar. Such guns, of course, might be dislodged by land forces, but it appeared to him to be very doubtful whether they were right in spending this large amount of money upon a part of Gibraltar which was within the range of guns. He could not help thinking that to incur the greater expense of establishing a harbour on the east side of Gibraltar might, perhaps, be the wiser policy. He should be glad to hear that this subject was being carefully considered by the Government. He believed there was no possible chance of our being at war with Spain, but the history of the past two centuries showed that whenever we had been at war, either with France or Spain, the other country had been dragged in. He did not propose to criticise the financial proposals of the Government, and he did not think it really mattered two straws whether amounts of money of this sort should be voted in the Estimates or by a Bill. It had a little startled hon. Members on that side of the House at first to find that Gentlemen who had criticised their action some years ago, should after such a short lapse of time propose practically the same method of raising their money, and he could only say that their action now certainly did not harmonise with their criticism of some years ago.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said, he did not desire to enter into any detailed examination of the works proposed to be constructed, but to examine the principle which underlies this Bill, and the method by which the Government proposed to give effect to it. On the Conservative side of the House they had given the Government hearty support in increasing the strength of the Navy. But when they understood that the Government proposed to take a certain portion of the expenditure which had hitherto fallen on the Annual Estimates out of the Estimates, and to expedite the work by raising money on loan, they were surprised, and now wished to examine the methods and principles on which the money was to be raised and continuously applied. This question of finance was really not an Admiralty, but a Treasury question, and therefore any criticism of his would not be directed against the Admiralty or the Naval Lords. Whenever any large expenditure was taken out of the Annual Estimates, and the Government of the day had recourse to loans or terminal annuities to defray it, they did so on one plea only, urgency. The first condition which should underlie a Bill such as this was that if it was worth while to construct works out of loan, there should be a time limit within which works so commenced should be finished. Then, when the House was asked to adopt exceptional procedure, it should be in possession of the total cost of the work which the Government proposed to take in hand. Another condition, quite as important as the other two, was that if the Bill was an annual Bill, and only met a portion of the expenditure, a statutory injunction should be imposed on future Chancellors of the Exchequer that when the money was exhausted another Bill would be brought in to provide more. Every one of these conditions was wanting in this Bill. He believed that no Bill to commence works out of loan in which these three conditions were wanting had been successful. He believed the Bill was based on the Fortifications Act of 1860 and subsequent Acts of Lord Palmerston's Government. Under no series of Acts had there been so much waste of expenditure. The history of those Acts was remarkable. The works proposed were in excess of what were proposed now. But Lord Palmerston had great advantages in floating his policy. He had just come into office with a large majority, and the relations between England and France were strained. The Volunteer Movement, which had attained such proportions, sprung up, and great pressure was put on the Government to devise an adequate scheme of fortifications. Lord Palmerston stated that the expenditure he wished to incur was 11 millions, and that the expenditure had been examined by experts. He asked the House to vote two millions in the first year, and the remaining nine millions in subsequent years. The plea under which Lord Palmerston induced the House of Commons to adopt his proposals was that all expenditure necessary would be found in three or four years, and the works would be completed. In the first Bill Lord Palmerston produced all the conditions he had alluded to as necessary were wanting. A year after that Bill was introduced Lord Palmerston was asked whether he intended to bring in another Bill. Another Bill was brought in in 1862, but the proposed expenditure was reduced to £6,900,000. The House of Commons objected to the Bill. There were many divisions. The Government were nearly defeated, and they had to insert in the schedule full details of expenditure up to date, the amount spent in the year, and other sums required. This schedule the House of Commons forced on the Government, and substituted it for the schedule in the Bill. A year after a Bill continuing these fortifications was introduced. Things went on until 1869, when Lord Cardwell brought in a final Bill. Nine years after Lord Palmerston brought in his Bills the fortifications were in no way completed, and Lord Cardwell's Bill was to provide :—

> "The final sum necessary to be raised on loan for carrying on the work now in course of construction for the protection of the Royal Arsenal and Dockyard, and authorising the abandonment of that portion of the work already sanctioned by Parliament which has not been commenced."

Lord Cardwell further explained that his Bill was founded on this principle, that the loan works should be brought to a final close not exceeding the estimate contained in the last Act of Parliament, that all works not already commenced, as far as loans were concerned, should be abandoned; and the works begun were to be utilised as much as possible, and completed as economically as possible. For 20 years the forts intended to be erected were useless, until the late Mr. Stanhope took the matter up in earnest, and brought in an Act by which funds were found necessary to arm these forts. After the waste of money incurred by the procedure adopted over the Fortifications Bill, the House would be much to blame if it adopted a similar Measure now. His object was to suggest certain alterations which the Government should make. Let the exact dimensions of the scheme be thought out and put into an Act of Parliament; let them ensure that the works necessary should be pushed on with expedition, and let the expenditure as far as those works were concerned be final. The late Government, in the cases of the Imperial Defence Act, the Barracks Act, and the Naval Defence Act, gave a full schedule of the total expenditure; in the Naval Defence Act they put a time limit; and each Defence Act they contrived so that it was complete in itself, and it was not necessary to come to Parliament for more money for the completion of the scheme. What were the statements in connection with this Bill? Last year the Government very properly undertook a much larger expenditure in connection with works than they incurred in the preceding year. At the time he pointed out that the sum put upon the Estimates was quite insufficient to meet the proposed expenditure; and the Civil Lord gave him a return by which it was shown that there would be a large increase in connection with the works over and above the Estimates. Since then, however, the Government had adopted fresh proposals. Last year's proposals involved an expenditure of £4,266,000, and the new proposals of this year a further expenditure of £4,315,000, making a total of £8,581,000. It was shown, however, by the return that only £1,300,000 of the expenditure was for works that were in any way included in this Bill, so that there remained a sum of £3,000,000 for works that were not touched by this Bill, these being Dover Harbour, Hongkong Dockyard extension, and Portsmouth Barracks. The first question that arose therefore was—Are those works part of the Government scheme or are they not? They had all known that the Navy Estimates must be largely added to, and he had calculated the increase at £2,000,000, but he doubted whether the revenue would stand it. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer found that it would, he increased the expenditure which the proposals of last year entailed and determined to meet a portion of it by means of a loan. Therefore it was necessary to have a clear and definite statement whether the new proposals mentioned in the return were part and parcel of the Government scheme, and, if they were, why they were not included in this Bill. A Bill of this kind, unless the House dealt very carefully with it, practically took away from the House all control over the works which were included in it, save by vote of censure, whilst, if they were charged upon the annual Estimates, they were subject every year to criticism in Committee of Supply. The way to secure a continuous naval and military policy was to get the consent of Parliament to a scheme to be continuously prosecuted; and the danger was that it was possible in a time of pressure for one determined Minister or Department to thwart the deliberate intention of the country, for which there was no redress but moving a Vote of Censure. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be ready to meet objections and to insert a clause which would make it imperative on the Government next year and in subsequent years to go on voting money until the works were completed. Then there ought to be a full schedule of all the expenditure as in the Fortification Act of 1862, showing the character of the work, the expenditure already incurred, the outlay to be incurred within the year, and an estimate of the remaining outlay. Lastly, they ought to have, if possible, some time limit. He did not know whether it would be necessary to pass an Instruction to the Committee in order to bring the Amendments he suggested within the scope of the Bill. His only desire was to adopt the best method of procedure, associated with the best safeguards experience could suggest, and then to pass a Bill the operation of which should be automatic, progressive and final, and should not result in another of those fiascoes which had characterised their procedure in the past.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, he desired to acknowledge the courtesy and fairness with which the noble Lord had dealt with the matter; but as regarded the form of the Bill there was a fundamental difference between the noble Lord and the Government. The noble Lord assumed that the only justification for a loan depended upon the urgency of the expenditure; whereas the Government thought that the true distinction between loans and votes should be whether the expenditure was permanent or temporary in character. That was why he drew a clear distinction between the Barracks Act and the Naval Defence Act. Their contention always had been that it was not proper to resort to loans for things that perished in the using, and that they should be reserved for permanent works. He had always held the doctrine that you might equalise annual expenditure in respect of public buildings and their sites by a well-regulated system of loans, and therefore he had never raised any objection to loans for permanent works. The Reports of the Debates would show that they on that side of the House did not offer any opposition to loans for barracks; but they did object to loans not being limited to such expenditure. Therefore he was not at one with the noble Lord as to the matter of urgency being the ground of discrimination. There was no pretence for saying that the fortifications, localisation, and barracks building schemes were regarded as matters of urgency, to be done in a short time, but the Naval Defence Act did rest upon urgency; and they did not object to resorting to loans for the permanent works. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time himself took the distinction; he said that he drew a clear distinction between works that were of a permanent character and those that were not. Speaking on the Imperial Defence Act on May 15, 1888, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "He was glad the hon. and learned Gentleman had called attention to the subject, because

it enabled him to say once more and most clearly, that the present proposal of the Government could not be drawn into a precedent for building ships by means of loans. He should himself very much deplore the fact if this were in any way turned into a precedent for meeting the needs of the year by means of a loan. He should always adhere to the principle that the needs of the year should be met out of the revenue of the year."

The reason why he thought it was desirable to have a loan in this case was not on account of urgency, but on account of the permanent character of the work. Then, as to the question of a time limit, there was no time limit in the Barracks Act; there was certainly no time limit in the Localisation of Forces Act, which extended over a great number of years; there was no time limit in the Fortifications Bill; and even in the Naval Defence Bill of the noble Lord the time limit did not answer its purpose, and he had to introduce Bills to extend the time. Therefore, he did not think the argument for a time limit was a strong argument. There was one other point the noble Lord took, and that was, that the House should be informed of the total cost. No doubt the House ought to be informed of the total cost of works on which they embarked; but the question was, whether the total cost of the works was to be put in a Bill. The ground the noble Lord took was, that it would bind future Governments and future Parties. That was exactly the very thing to which he had always objected, and always should object. It was not right to bind future Governments and Parties in these matters. What right had the House to bind future Governments? That was the very question which was fought out in the year 1862, when the Fortifications Bill was brought in. The strict limitation in the Bill of the expenditure for the particular year was the doing of a Conservative Opposition. Those fortifications, at that time, were thought to be very valuable, and everybody now admitted them to be practically of no use whatever; therefore, if any obligation had been imposed on future Governments, they would have been compelled to spend millions on works which would have been totally useless. He wished to point out what was the principle for which Sir Stafford Northcote and Sir George Lewis contended on that occasion, and on which the Bill was framed. Sir Stafford Northcote, in 1862, introduced a Schedule into the Bill. What was the object of that Schedule? It was to confine the Government in the strictest possible way to the expenditure for that year, and to prevent the Government from spending one single farthing beyond the necessities of the cost incurred in that year, on the very ground that no future Parliament and no future Government should be bound by anything beyond that done during the current year. Sir Stafford Northcote, on July 10th, 1862, in moving his Amendment, said:—

> "It provided that it should not be lawful to apply to any work any greater sum than that set down in the Schedule as the total estimated cost of the work. He then wished to provide that the Government should not be at liberty to make any contract involving a greater expenditure than the sum set down for the first year, for the works in the same district."

The Government had not gone so far. Stafford Northcote went on:—

> "There were two objects in view. One was to limit the expenditure to the present year, by insisting on a correct and real appropriation of the money; and secondly, to limit the power of the Government to bind the House by contract, so as to put it out of the power of the House in the next year to act freely in the matter."

Then again:—

> "All the reasons which prevailed on the House in 1860, not only to sanction a considerable expenditure, but to sanction the objectionable practice of meeting the expenditure by borrowing money, were now crumbling to dust. The main object in his proviso was this, to recover the control with which the House of Commons ought never to have parted."

That was the object of the framework of the Fortifications Bill in the year 1862. What the noble Lord asked was, that they should say to future Parliaments that they were bound by the decisions of this Parliament.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No; what I want to prevent is, that any Minister shall upset a policy without bringing in a Bill.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, he had another very great objection to that. The moment expenditure of this kind was put into a Statute, they removed from the House of Commons the control over expenditure. There might be an enormous majority in the House of Commons differing from a former policy, and desiring to stop the expenditure upon it, but if the suggestion of the noble Lord were adopted, they might be giving a veto over the authority of the House of Commons, with reference to public expenditure, to the House of Lords. That was, to his mind, a fundamental objection to a policy of this character. It would be a matter of really vital importance to bind any future Parliament on a question of this kind; and to leave the question whether the House of Commons in a future Parliament was to deal with it or not to the House of Lords was, in his opinion, not a sound policy. That was the reason why the Government had adopted the course they had taken. It was dictated by Mr. Disraeli and Sir Stafford Northcote in 1862. It was followed on that occasion, and they were very careful to maintain the control of the House of Commons over the expenditure of the country, whether it were in the form of a loan or in the form of Annual Estimates. Therefore, he could not accept the principle of the noble Lord that the Bill ought to be framed so as to oust the financial jurisdiction of the House of Commons in future years. He did not think the House need be in the least alarmed lest there should be any danger of the House of Commons being unwilling to support the necessities of the Navy.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Surrey, Eastbourne): We are not afraid of the House of Commons. It is the Government we are afraid of.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER asked, what need was there to be afraid of the Government. After all, the Government had to be afraid of House of Commons. Therefore, any alarm on that ground was, to his mind, chimerical. Accordingly, he could not agree to the principle of the noble Lord that a loan was founded on urgency, and not on the permanency of the works. He could not agree to the time limit because, in his opinion, works were much more necessary at one time than at others, and, therefore, to bind themselves to time, showed a distrust of the House of Commons and a distrust of the Government of the day—a distrust that they would not be always ready to keep works of this kind going at times when they considered it necessary for the advantage and protection of the country. If the noble Lord thought that the more elaborate schedule proposed in 1862 by Sir Stafford Northcote would be more satisfactory, he did not think that much objection would be raised to it; but this would be a question to discuss in Committee. The noble Lord asked whether the Government considered that they were binding themselves to these new works. Certainly the intention of the Government was to carry out these works. He had always held a very strong opinion that Dover, commanding both the North Sea and the Channel, was of all places in the world the place where there ought to be a harbour. He was now anxious, and always had been anxious, to see a Government harbour at Dover; and therefore he was willing to say that the Government were as much in earnest about Dover as any other part of the scheme. That was the view of the Government, and he hoped the noble Lord would consider it to be a satisfactory statement. The Government would be willing to enter into a fair discussion on any alteration of the Bill in Committee; but at present he must state the reasons why he could not accept some of the canons which had been laid down by the noble Lord.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) said, that in view of the very unfair and shabby treatment accorded to Haulbowline in the present Bill, he thought that he would be neglecting his duty as representing the constituency in which that neglected dockyard was situated if he failed to take this opportunity to press for some definite statement as to the precise proportion of the money to be voted by the Bill which it was intended to expend there. He greatly feared, judging from past experience, that the Irish share of the grant would be an exceedingly small one, because he regretted to say that it appeared to be the settled policy of the Admiralty to ignore the claims of their only Irish dockyard. He considered that he was justified in making the assertion because, although since the present Government had been in office the Annual Naval Expenditure had increased by about £4,500,000, Haulbowline had reaped little or no benefit from this additional expenditure, while vast sums had been, or were about to be, expended on British dockyards. It was an undeniable fact, almost a shameful one, that of each £100 contributed by the unfortunate Irish taxpayers towards the maintenance of the Imperial Navy, the handsome proportion of about half a sovereign was considered to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the only Government dockyard in the country. In addition to the £1,000,000 which it was proposed to expend, no less than £4,465,000 was to be spent on dockyard work during the current financial year, and of this sum the magnificent total of £7,163 was to be devoted to the needs of Haulbowline, or considerably less than a six-hundredth part of the outlay, towards which Ireland would be called upon to contribute about one-twelfth. When he asked the Civil Lord a question on the subject the other day, he was referred to the Navy Estimates, and those were the facts which the Estimates told—facts of which every Englishman ought to feel ashamed. He challenged the Civil Lord to say that such a division of Imperial expenditure between an impoverished country and a wealthy one was either equitable or just. It could only be defended on the principle that might was right, and that was not the spirit in which Liberal statesmen desired to act towards Ireland any longer. Not one of the important works recommended by the naval officials at Haulbowline towards the proper equipment of this dockyard, even for repairing purposes, had been adopted by the Admiralty. Was it not an absurdity as well as a scandalous waste of public money to maintain a staff of officials for the mere purposes of calculating abstruse specifications and drawing up elaborate plans of works which it was apparently never intended to construct? There was a suspicion also—he feared a well-founded one—that even the miserable sums voted for Haulbowline were not all expended there; and he asked for a specific assurance on that point. It was a curious circumstance that when he visited this dockyard shortly before last Christmas there was little or no appearance even of a beginning having been made with either of the important works towards which £1,000 had been voted last year; and when he asked a question on this subject two months ago, he was told that those buildings had not been hurried during the summer on purpose to avoid the necessity of discharging the workmen in the autumn and the winter. But he found it exceedingly difficult to reconcile that statement with the information furnished to him by the naval officials at Haulbowline on the occasion of the visit referred to. It was to the effect that over 100 men had been discharged from Haulbowline since the summer. Why? Because there was no money to pay them; and many of these men were dismissed at a time when very severe distress prevailed at Queenstown. He regretted to say that he unavailingly brought the painful circumstance to the notice of the Civil Lord. One of the strongest motives that impelled him to press the claims of Haulbowline to a fair and reasonable share of this grant was because it would give employment to those deserving and hardly-treated men. He hardly thought that in the present condition of this dockyard it was possible for the Admiralty to adhere to the undertaking given by them last year that ships on the Irish station should in future be repaired there. He feared from what he had heard that this promise had not been very strictly carried out, and he would press the Civil Lord to give some satisfactory undertaking on that point. The attitude which successive Boards of Admiralty had adopted towards Haulbowline was a mystery and puzzle to every Irishman. The Naval Authorities did not appear to realise that they possessed in Queenstown the finest harbour in Europe, and the only port of refuge for ships disabled in the Bay of Biscay, or for ships injured during the Autumn Naval Manœuvres on the Irish coast. The basins had been constructed at a cost of nearly three-quarters of a million and only required a slight outlay to render them serviceable and efficient. No doubt there were certain difficulties in the way of converting Haulbowline into a building yard, but from an Imperial standpoint it would be an inestimable advantage if it could be properly equipped as a first-rate repairing yard. The Admiralty would never wake up to the importance of this question until some battleship went to the bottom in attempting to cross the Channel in a leaky condition. The standing excuse for neglecting Haulbowline was that there was already more dockyard accommodation than was required; but the contents of this Bill shattered that excuse to atoms. He earnestly appealed to the Admiralty to follow no longer the old bad and dishonest policy of their predecessors in this matter, and to rise superior to the temptation to purchase English dockyard votes with money properly belonging to Ireland, Finally, he desired to express his acknowledgments and thanks for the benefit conferred on the south of Ireland by the decision to establish a training ship on that coast.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said that, thanks to the courtesy of the Civil Lord, he had had an opportunity, along with other Members interested in the matter, of inspecting the plans which were the subject of discussion. He could not but observe with immense satisfaction the great progress of public opinion which must have taken place in order that so magnificent and far-reaching a scheme as was specified in those plans should be now within measurable distance of accomplishment. He had not to look back very far to a time when the most sanguine would hardly have dared to hope for such a realisation of their wishes. Only two Sessions ago it was ruled out of order to discuss the question of the Gibraltar Dock on the Dockyard Vote. That state of things was now entirely changed, and it was now realised that a dockyard without a dock was a waste of public money. The speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the noble Lord on the Front Opposition Bench, although of great interest, would not interest in the highest degree those who regarded this question purely from a Naval and Military point of view. Though it was important that the two sides should adjust their differences as to the financial methods to be employed, that was, not the essential part of the question. The weak point in these proposals was, that there was absolutely no guarantee as to the speed with which the works would be carried out, or as to their initiation at all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer laid down the doctrine that it was not advisable or customary for one Parliament to bind another, or for the Vote of one Session to determine the Vote of another. That doctrine was hardly in accordance with well-known facts. He had seen the Chancellor of the Exchequer a party to votes which violated that doctrine. The work of shipbuilding must be considered from Session to Session, and even from Parliament to Parliament. The House had a right to ask for some guarantee that this great programme, which had been everywhere hailed as adequate to the necessities of the present time, at any rate, would be translated into reality. In the two most important points—the Hongkong and Dover works—there was no guarantee that they would ever be undertaken. Why should there be any delay? The Chancellor of the Exchequer went back to the bad old argument founded on the statement that works undertaken in Lord Palmerston's time were now useless, and that it was a great pity they were undertaken. He might as well say "Do not insure your house; because my insurance last year and the year before was wasted, my house not having been burnt down." This argument was often used and always to throw dust in the eyes of the people, and to burke the true problem. If these works had to be done, the sooner they were begun and finished the better. Nine millions would be required; and the country wanted value for the money. Surely authority could be given to the responsible Department to go on with the works as fast as possible, with the assurance that the money would be provided as it was wanted. Why should the Hong Kong works wait? Was the outlook so peaceful and satisfactory in the East that the country could afford to let these works slide? No advantage was to be gained by delay either there or at Dover, where a previous survey had accumulated a vast amount of information for the engineering operations. A date had been given for the completion of the Gibraltar works, but he hoped that that was not a fixed and final date. The period, first announced as seven years, had now been reduced to five. If the Civil Lord declared that according to the advice of the most experienced contractors, five years was the shortest period possible for the completion of the works, the House would accept the assurance. But he believed that that period was too long. The works could be begun at, at least, six different points simultaneously; and with regard to the dock, a great portion of it would be blasting work. The great Alpine tunnels afforded some experience of the work of rock excavation by modern appliances. A few weeks on the works of these great tunnels represented the amount of rock excavation which would have to be undertaken above the water-level at Gibraltar in the construction of the dock. He understood that the Government were going to employ their own engineers on the work, and he thought that might be desirable; but he should like to hear the opinion of some great contractor, accustomed to executing works on a large scale, as to whether so long a period as five years was necessary for the completion of the work. At any rate, the works might be initiated more quickly. He hoped that the noble Lord would press for some definite statement of time; and he could assure the Civil Lord that he would meet with nothing but support, both in and out of the House, if he would abandon the plan of making this a matter of dole from year to year. Could the Civil Lord tell them he was absolutely certain that this million sterling would be expended on the works within the time specified, because if he could not, *pro tanto*, they would waste the money? Until they were completed, the works were of no use at all, and therefore, true economy was either to have the money in our pockets or have the works finished. He was anxious the contractors should be instructed to go on full steam and not be checked for one day till they had done the work and turned it over to the satisfaction of the Government Inspectors.

*Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, the financial part of the matter was that which interested him the least, nevertheless, it was undoubtedly most interesting. The Bill provided for the expenditure of 1,000,000 sterling, but the House would, on reference to the statement of the proposed naval works which the Bill was intended to initiate, see that what was proposed was an expenditure of 9,000,000 sterling. One point he wished to make quite clear, and it was that after to-day it would be impossible for the House to discuss the matters connected with one sovereign of the expenditure. When a supplementary Vote was presented, they were always told they could not discuss the principle upon which the original Vote was founded. This was an original Vote, an original vote which involved the expenditure of £9,000,000 sterling. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer was extremely virtuous as to the method by which this money was to be obtained; he was not going to raise money by borrowing. To-night he said: "I am not borrowing in the sense in which I used the term, because I am going to borrow for permanent works." And he distinguished between breakwaters, fortifications, dredging—a less permanent work than dredging he (Mr. T. G. Bowles) really did not know—and ships. Ironclads, the right hon. Gentleman said, were like ladies' bonnets, always getting out of fashion. But were fortifications in any different case? Had not the original fortifications at Portsmouth and Plymouth and Alderney gone entirely out of fashion? Did not breakwaters go out of fashion? All these permanent works were as little permanent as a lady's bonnet. They were, indeed, like a lady's watch, always out of repair and always requiring expenditure. "But," said the Chancellor of the Exchequer: "I am not going to make a loan in the ordinary way; I am going to give you an opportunity every year of controlling this expenditure, and of stopping it if you please, because I am going to submit an Annual Loan Bill." And the First Lord told them in his statement that in this way "the control of Parliament would be effectively maintained over the expenditure." Could it be pretended that the House was to be asked to begin to build to the extent of £9,000,000 sterling, and then, when it had spent £1,000,000 sterling that it could stop the works? On that ground alone, he said that if once they accepted this Bill, they were practically pledged to the whole of the works. It might be that as the works progressed they might not approve of some of them, and when they, the Opposition, had crossed the floor of the House, if ever they did, he might find it necessary to move some reduction of the Vote. He might be told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover square, or possibly by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, that he must resist the Motion, and the right hon. Gentleman would closure him in the name of keeping faith with the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motto was : "Pay as you go;" but this year it was : "Borrow as you go." Of course they knew how the tremendous change had been brought about. The First Lord of the Admiralty went to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and told him he must have the money. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he had not got it, whereupon the First Lord said : "Then borrow it." Then the usual scene ensued. The Chancellor of the Exchequer recalled his marriage vows in which he swore he would never borrow; Don Juan of the Admiralty pressed a little more, and Donna Julia of the Treasury,

"A little still she strove, and much repented,
And whispering, 'I will ne'er consent'—
consented."

And having consented she came to the House, renewed her vestal vows, and swore she was no worse than she ought to be, and indeed, a great deal better than the financial prudes who sat on the Front Opposition Bench. Of course they were sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer had lost his financial virtue, but it mitigated their sorrow that he had lost it in the cause of the British Navy. As he had said £9,000,000 sterling was to be spent, £4,000,000 on docks and dredging, £1,000,000 on barracks, and £4,000,000 on torpedo defences. As to the docks and dredging his belief was they were all necessary and proper works to be made, especially the dock at Gibraltar. A great deal of rubbish had been talked about the danger to which that dock would be exposed in time of war. War was an exceptional state, and however open to attack in time of war the dock would always serve its uses in time of peace; and in time of peace, as everybody knew, Gibraltar was filled with cripples from the Mediteranean and Atlantic, and up to this time it had never been able to do any repairs. But the dock would be equally safe in time of war unless we were at war with Spain. The gallant captain behind him had said that if we went to war with France we should probably get to war with Spain. [Captain Bethell : "We always have been."] No; the gallant Gentleman forgot the Peninsular campaign, when, together with Spaniards, we drove France out of Spain and contributed so much to the final defeat of Napoleon. It was unlikely we should ever be at war with Spain; but if we were, he doubted whether Spain would be able to do damage to the dock at Gibraltar. The dangers to the dock from hostile attack, even from Spanish territory, had been enormously exaggerated; but even if they existed, he would rather have the dock with all its danger than have no dock at all.

Captain BETHELL said his criticism was in connection with the alternative scheme.

*Mr. T. G. BOWLES said, he now came to the question of barracks, He was at variance with the policy of putting seamen into barracks. He admitted that in these days we did not want so large a proportion of seamen on our men-of-war—he himself was an advocate for replacing a considerable portion of seamen by blue and red marines—but he maintained that the seamen we have must be even more finished seamen than those of old. The whole tendency of this barrack policy was to put an end to seamanship, and to substitute in its place what he would call landsmanship. He, therefore, thought it was a mistaken policy. The next important matter was the torpedo attack works. It was proposed to spend close on four millions on such works—£1,000,000 at Gibraltar; £650,000 at Portland; and £2,000,000 at Dover. In saying it he might be thought a shocking naval heretic, but he did not believe in torpedo boats or in torpedo attacks; because, in his opinion, they never could succeed except there was gross carelessness on the part of those attacked, and that was a position in which he hoped our fleet would never be found. He thought those very works would have a tendency to produce that want of vigilance which, in his judgment, was the one condition of success in a torpedo attack. The best policy was to meet torpedo boats with torpedo boats. It was said that the strain on the men would be great if they were exposed to attack by torpedo boats. That was true; but our business was to teach our men to stand that strain. There was a terrible strain on our seamen during the blockade of Toulon for two years; but the men went through it unflinchingly, and at the end proved themselves to be the finest seamen in Europe. It was nonsense at this time of day to propose to remove all strain on our seamen by boxing their ships up inside breakwaters, so that the men could turn in and go to sleep without any apprehension or anxiety. His first objection to this scheme of torpedo defence by the construction of breakwaters at Gibraltar, Portland and Dover was that it meant crowding our ships into places from which it would be difficult for them to get out again. It would, to a large extent, destroy the mobility of the ships. The mobility of a ship was its great virtue. There was no more helpless thing in the world than a ship at anchor; and the more they tried to keep the torpedo out, the more they would keep the ships in. They would box up the ships, and, therefore, render them the more helpless. His second objection to the scheme was that by gathering the vessels into those places they invited attack. The enemy could fire into the crown of our ships at any of those three places from two or three miles out in the open sea, and the fleet being huddled up together could not return the fire. It should be remembered that at Dover there was a rise and fall of the tide of from 18 to 20 feet, which meant that at low water every vessel would have, between her and the attacking ships outside, a wall of breakwater 20 feet high close to her and masking her guns. That he thought was a most serious matter. His next objection was that whatever defence those breakwaters might be against the present torpedo, they would be no defence at all against the aerial torpedo, which he believed would be greatly developed in time. A further objection was that those places would each require land works and a small army to defend them. In fact, the scheme amounted to this—that breakwater and land forces should do work that would be far better done by the fleet if the fleet were properly handled. The worst thing that could happen to war-vessels was to keep them in a secure place doing nothing or next to nothing. Lord St. Vincent, when in the *Tagus* in 1796 said, "Inactivity in the *Tagus* will make cowards of us all." He believed that would be the tendency of those torpedo works, and therefore he considered them mistaken. He hoped the House would bear with him while he proceeded to consider the general question of naval strategy to which he had devoted much time and attention. No one could belittle the importance of the subject. It meant that disposition of our fleet and our stations over all the seas which would enable us to retain our supremacy over all the world; and if mistakes were made in time of peace, dearly would she rue it when the stress of war came upon us. He thought mistakes were being made which would diminish the natural advantages which the kingdom possessed as the centre of naval operations. Those natural advantages were stupendous. Like Tyre, these islands might be said to be seated "in the seat of God in the midst of the sea." We had all the habitable lands—Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—grouped around us, and we stood in the centre of all the naval routes, at the crossing of all the roads, and on eternally interior lines. Our islands were so placed in regard to Europe that we divided North Europe from South Europe; and, as history showed, if both North and South Europe were against us we could prevent them meeting, because in the Straits of Dover we commanded the gate. Yet while thus preventing the junction of our enemies we could maintain free intercourse with our friends, for the western ports of our kingdom must remain open, and could never be blockaded, even though the whole navies of the world joined in the attack. This then brought him to the question of the relative importance of positions for arsenals and dockyards as stations for the main forces of our fleet. As to Gibraltar, he thought it a priceles possession. He, therefore, approved of everything which had been done there with the single exception of the torpedo defences, whose utility he doubted. Here he might say that he marvelled how any man with the slightest pretence to be a student of naval history and naval strategy, could ever recommend the voluntary surrender of the Mediterranean. In the event of war we could not, would not, and should not give it up without a struggle. In that fight we should probably win, but win or lose, fight for it we must. But he was not so confident as to the importance of Dover and Portland. These places were within torpedo-striking distances of the coast of a country which might in conceivable circumstances be hostile to us. But his main objection to them was that they were not places from which our fleet could make the greatest effect upon our enemies. He never contemplated for our fleet a policy of defence. As Blake had said, "Those who would command the sea must always attack," and for attack Dover and Portland were not suitable. Far better places, for all strategical purposes, were Chatham and Plymouth—Chatham to command North Europe, Plymouth to command South Europe, and both combined together, like forceps, to defend the south coast, to close their forces on any attack that might take place between them. Indeed, a better position than even Plymouth, for Naval action, would be (as Lord St. Vincent long ago pointed out as the result of his practical experience) the Scilly Isles, which offered the most splendid position, either for assemblage of convoys, for defence of Ireland, or for attack upon any part of South Europe. For a quarter of the sum the Government proposed to spend on Dover, they could convert those isles into the safest and most ideal strategical position in all Europe. History had shown them that in time of war it was not at Dover or Portland that their positions must be. As for a harbour of refuge, every seaman must know that Dover was not the right place for it. If they were to have a harbour of refuge, it must be at Dungeness, where they were considerably removed from the Downs. As for a strategic position, he thought that works at Dover, or a naval position which involved the keeping of a great force at Dover, would be not only useless, but positively mischievous. Dover, of course, commended itself to naval landsmen who wanted to have their defences close to them, but it was the greatest mistake to suppose that the naval defence should be close to the country that required to be defended. They had not forgotten those hosts assembled at Boulogne to invade this country. And how was this country protected from them? Not by anything at Dover or Portland, but it was saved by the fleets which blockaded Brest, Rochfort, Ferrol, and Toulon. It was the action which took place 1,500 miles away at the ports of the enemy which prevented the hosts who, from Boulogne, could look upon the cliffs of Dover, from ever landing upon them. It was not at Dover they wanted their defence, but it was at the ports of the enemy they required their ships. He had ventured to lay these criticisms and considerations before the House. He thought it would be recognised that they were not light criticisms, nor should they be lightly passed over. He might have strengthened them, but, for many reasons, he preferred to remain on general grounds, and to confine them rather to general suggestions. He believed those who considered the subject would agree with him that the true principles of strategy were the same now as they were in Lord St. Vincent's time, with the sole difference that we had a greater advantage than was possessed in Lord Vincent's time in acting on interior lines. These criticisms were serious; he had learned them from the works of great seamen and great masters, and from the lessons taught by their last naval war. He submitted them with all diffidence to the House, and he trusted they would receive from the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, and from the First Lord, that attention which undoubtedly they deserved.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) wished to direct the attention of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty to practical points concerning Dover and Gibraltar. As to Dover, he should not follow the hon. Member for King's Lynn into the strategic considerations, but he would assume that the advisers of the Admiralty were right in what they had recommended as to these works being proceeded with. Having made this assumption then, he must agree with what had been said as to the unwisdom of postponing the works. He desired to know why there was to be such postponement? He rather understood from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that convict labour was to be utilised.

MR. ROBERTSON said that was not so.

*SIR C. DILKE was glad to hear that, and observed that in the original scheme of some years ago it was intended to make strong endeavours to have convicts employed there. But the situation had wholly changed in recent years with regard to convict labour, whilst the machinery employed in making breakwaters was of so delicate a nature that to employ convicts on the work would be waste of time and money. He left that aside, merely asking the ground for the delay in commencing these works at Dover, which he assumed, for the purpose of this discussion, to be necessary works. Whilst the hon. Member for King's Lynn had greatly questioned the wisdom of the works at Dover, he had agreed with every other speaker in admitting the importance of the works at Gibraltar, except as to that relating to the torpedoes, in which he differed from every naval authority. At Gibraltar there was only one dock to be built. The House would remember the patriotic endeavours made by the hon. Member for West Belfast and Sir George Chesney, whose death they all lamented, to bring this question of dock accommodation at Gibraltar before the country and the Government, and they must all be glad at the partial success with which they had met, and which was recognised in this Bill. The importance of the position at Gibraltar—entirely independent of the question of the command of the Mediterranean—could not be overrated, and to have only one dock there was altogether insufficient. In time of war they would need more than one dock, and they must always have war in mind when discussing a Bill of this sort. One dock was a very small provision to make against the chances, or, indeed, the certainties, of future war. The Minister of the French Marine, in the recent debates on the Estimates, recognised the probability that, in the naval engagements of the future, ships on both sides would be crippled, and that the Power which was able to kept a certain number of ships out of the first engagement would be the Power to command the seas after the first day's operations. If British ships, therefore, were fighting at a great distance from home, and probably from Malta, how were they to bring their crippled ships to port for repairs and continue to hold the seas unless they had adequate dock accommodation? It had been said that it would be costly to construct docks on the east side of Gibraltar; but on the western side, even within the limits of the present scheme, there was room not for one dock only but for three, and three docks could be built as fast as one. Even if the larger and more costly and difficult scheme on the east side was not pressed, he urged that the provision of dock accommodation at Gibraltar, which was so urgently needed, should be pushed forward with the greatest possible speed, there being, as he had pointed out, ample space for three docks on the western side, and within the limits of the present scheme.

MR. G. WYNDHAM (Dover), alluding to the criticisms of the hon. Member for Lynn Regis, observed that for very many years all men of light and leading in naval matters had regarded Dover as the place at which a national harbour of refuge should be constructed. But he was content, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, to shelter himself behind the assumption that the Government had been well advised in this matter, and to accept the recognition of the necessity for this harbour which had been given so fully and frankly by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in that Debate. He had a number of arguments and statistics in favour of the importance and urgency of making at Dover a harbour of refuge, but he would discard them and take the admission of the Government. All he asked was, that they would take the next logical step upon those admissions. He had but one point to make—he made it with brevity and with considerable hope. It was that Hong Kong and Dover ought to be mentioned in the schedule of the Bill. Accepting the whole of the Government plan as it stood, he asked them to complete it by filling up the schedule, so that the House should be associated with them in inaugurating a policy which was popular throughout the whole country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had defended his pedantic finance on the ground that he wished to show the greatest reverence for the House of Commons. How could he better show his reverence than by making the House of Commons his colleagues in the inauguration of his great scheme? He knew it had been urged that to publish details about battleships was injurious, but here the Government had published the whole scheme, and yet they would not ask the House to vote the money for it. The House of Commons resented the practice of the spending Departments of taking money allocated to one item and spending it on another, but here the Government deliberately, and of set purpose, went into this scheme meaning to spend the money and yet refused to the House of Commons the right which they claimed of associating themselves with them in this great scheme for defending the British Empire.

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne), knew that the hon. Member for Dover was not speaking on behalf of his constituents alone, but also having thought out these questions for years on behalf of the Naval Service. For his own part he wished to speak purely from the Naval view. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman opposite, Sir C. Dilke, for his admirable speech, and the first-class suggestion he had made that the Government ought not to limit their action to the one dock at Gibraltar. He was afraid the hon. Member for King's Lynn represented but a small portion of Naval opinion in the views he had put before the House. The hon. Member forgot the changed conditions of naval warfare. In former days officers and men had no fear of a submarine enemy. It was well-known on the part of everybody that, even in the summer manœuvres, the wear and tear on the part of officers and men was almost more than they could endure, and if, during the anxieties and responsibilities of war they could not have a decent night's rest when in harbour, coaling or victualling their ships, they would fill our madhouses—for that was the short and long of it. He wished to emphasise the opinion of the hon. Member for Dover as to the serious mistake of the Government in omitting to include the harbour at Dover. It must have been done intentionally, and it was very strange that, apparently according to Clause 4 of the Bill, the Treasury were to be furnished with a full estimate of the details, but the House of Commons not. He still ventured to hope there would be a proper schedule annexed to the Bill, not necessarily stating that the cost should be confined to the specified amount, but giving the estimated cost of every work contracted for. He thought the Naval barracks might very well wait if there was any financial difficulty to encounter; but he could not see any reason why Hong Kong and Dover should be omitted. So long ago as May 1886 the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the

> "matter [Dover] had been carefully considered by a Committee of the Cabinet, consisting of the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and they had come to the conclusion that the first works that ought to be undertaken were those at Dover."

Surely the necessity had not become less by the effluxion of time. By the tremendous importance of torpedo warfare, this work indeed had become one of extreme urgency. Unless he heard that the Naval advisers were in favour of the exclusion of Dover from the programme, he would not believe that this had been done with their approval, but rather that it had been done in spite of their disapproval. It was madness to waste time and to hesitate about incurring expenditure when they could readily get the money. Naval men were never afraid of the House of Commons but of the Government, and this was true whichever Government was in power. All Governments were more or less alike in this matter, unless they were heavily squeezed by public opinion pressing on their heels. He did not trouble his head about the manner in which the money was to be found. He did not care about that so long as it was found, but surely in that Bill they should find the probable estimated cost. It might be that the Government of the day would be slack in carrying out that which the previous Government were sincerely desirous of accomplishing. He should not accuse Government of not acting in good faith, but it looked as if they were acting under abnormal pressure, and if that abnormal pressure were removed they might not be so earnest in carrying out that great scheme to maintain their sea power. Why keep from them all the estimated cost of all these works? He thought his noble Friend was justified in all the observations he had made, and particularly as to the "cold fit" which might come on again. They should take steps to make it almost obligatory on the successors of a Government to spend the necessary money, but that was not to be realised, he feared, judging from the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nothing had been said justifying the omission of the important works connected with Dover. He hoped everyone who spoke would enforce that contention. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the House were the masters. No they were not; they were slaves, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be the first to fall foul of any hon. Member who proposed any increase. He, however, should move to put Dover in the Bill and take a Division upon it.

Dr. COMMINS (Cork Co., S.E.) hoped that defects in regard to the conveyance of workmen to Haulbowline would be made good. He thought there was inadequate accommodation in this respect.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON expressed, in the first place, his acknowledgments of the unanimity with which the proposals in the Bill had been received by the House. There had been nothing challenged, and even so few questions had been asked that he had very little to say on behalf of the Admiralty. With regard to Dover, the hon. Member and also the gallant Admiral had left the House, but his hon. Friend was still present, and all he had to say practically was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had already marked the limits within which he must be guided. It was not for him to go beyond the lines laid down by his right hon. Friend, but he was sure the spirit of his remarks had been correctly interpreted. As to Dover, the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not pledge himself as to the employment of convicts, and his own belief was that it would not be found convenient to employ them. As to the million covered by the Resolution, it would be competent for any Member to introduce a new item by taking an amount from one or more items in the Bill. That, he believed, would be perfectly in order. As to Hong Kong, that was a pure question for Committee. The only dissentient note struck was by the Member for Lynn Regis, who was no longer in his place, and he challenged the barrack policy. They only continued that policy, and it was better from all points of view of discipline and even seamanship that the men should be housed in suitable buildings on shore instead of in hulks, which took up space now wanted. That was the policy of the late and the present Board. As to the financial provisions of the Bill, they had already been dealt with. The hon. Member for East Cork had broached the question of Haulbowline, but the point raised was scarcely germane to the Bill.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Cork) said, surely they had a right to know in what proportion the money was to be spent?

Mr. ROBERTSON said, that question was not asked at all.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN held that it had been raised.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, the question referred to was the general administration of Haulbowline. The dredging of Hawlbowline meant the cutting of a new channel, and could, therefore, be properly described as permanent works. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean suggested that, instead of one dock, two or even three docks should be made at Gibraltar. The disposition of the House towards the Bill was that of "asking for more," and his right hon. Friend's suggestion would be taken into consideration. The hon. Member for the Holderness Division expressed the opinion that the harbour at Gibraltar should have been made on the east side. But the proposal now made had been carefully considered, and it was the unanimous opinion of the Board of Admiralty that the wiser course was to proceed with the extension of the present dockyard accommodation.

Captain BETHELL asked whether the Admiralty had considered the dangers that might arise on that side of Gibraltar in time of war.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, the best naval and military opinion was that the desirability of these works counterbalanced any dangers that might exist. The question of a more westerly harbour than Portland had not been considered, and he could not, therefore, express any opinion upon it. He concluded by asking the House to allow the Second Reading to be taken now, and said that if they did so they might be able to get rid of certain other Bills to-night, and thus give on the first Monday after Easter an opportuntiy for discussing Vote 8 of the Navy Estimates, on which a great many questions were likely to be raised.

Sir E. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, it was rarely that the House had before it questions of greater moment to the country than those involved in this Bill. The majority of hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House were rejoiced at finding that the Government were alive to the necessity and importance of the great works of defence and of naval construction provided for in the measure, and for this reason they were disposed to pass over lightly the inconsistency and paradox which were involved in the present proposals of the Government. For his own part he regarded the Bill as a triumph of the Imperial idea. It marked the complete overthrow of the Party which had been known under various names. as peace-at-any-price men, Little Englanders, and so forth. The fact that a Radical Government were proposing such a measure marked the practical end of that party which so long dominated the military and naval and Imperial policy of the country. They could not shut their eyes altogether to the fact, too, that the Bill was a practical condemnation by the Government themselves of the attitude which they adopted when in opposition in regard to the Naval Defence Act seven years ago. The then Government proposed to spend £21,000,000 to bring the Navy up to the necessary state of efficiency, and the repayment of that money was spread over periods of five and seven years. The right hon. Gentlemen who now composed the present Government then strongly opposed the principle of any postponement of repayment and of any loan; yet they now proposed to the House to expend £8,500,000 on works which they all admitted to be necessary, and to spread the repayment over a period, not of five or seven years, but of 30 years. The inconsistency of the Government in this was obvious. Still, he was glad to get the works promised and provided for, and therefore he would not dwell further on that point. There were features in the Bill, however, which were open to objection, especially in respect to its vagueness. There was no provision in it to ensure that the money should be spent on the works within any given period, no restriction that would prevent the present or any future Government from delaying the works and spreading the expenditure of the money over 20 or 30 years, or abandoning the works altogether except for the inherent absurdity of such a course. The financial part of the present scheme was open to the serious objection, therefore, that the works might, under stress of Party influence, Treasury pressure, or financial difficulties, be greatly restricted during the coming year, and no practical answer had been given to this criticism. It would be open to future Governments, or Treasuries, to cut down and delay the works as they pleased. Under the Naval Defence Act the works provided for could not possibly be restricted or postponed except by a new Act of Parliament. Mere pressure from the Treasury would not be sufficient to delay the work under that Act, but in the present case the Government could say that only a million or half a million of the money should be spent in a given year. For this reason he thought it was a misfortune that the whole scheme was not clearly and definitely put in the Bill, and in such a way that it would require an act of the Legislature to restrict or delay the works. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had made some criticisms upon the Bill, but they were effectually answered by the hon. and gallant Member for the Eastbourne Division, who pointed out that the hon. Member had overlooked the great changes that had taken place in modern warfare. It was pointed out that in his criticisms as to the proposed harbour for Dover and the rendezvous and harbour of Portland, the hon. Member for King's Lynn had overlooked the great revolution which the torpedo and the torpedo boat had effected in modern naval strategy and warfare. Anyone, however much of a layman he might be, who had studied the annual manœuvres, and had heard the opinions of distinguished officers who had taken part in them, must know that the stress placed on the whole complement of a ship by the liability to torpedo attacks was so terrible that it could only be borne for a limited period. The hon. Member said something about the Downs being a safe anchorage for a British fleet. It would be impossible for such a fleet to anchor safely there in the case of war with France. The torpedo boat could now steam 18 or 20 miles an hour, and therefore in one short hour the enemy would be able to launch a crowd of such boats upon the fleet. Dover was a place of great importance for both defensive and offensive purposes, and it was necessary that our Fleet should have safe anchorage and harbour there. He regarded a protected harbour at Dover as one of the most important proposals of the Government. Such a harbour should be torpedo-proof. It was true the hon. Gentleman pointed out certain advantages that Dungeness possessed, but he did not prove that that place was in any way superior to Dover. It was almost incredible that we should have no safe harbour for our Fleet on the whole of the east coast. He regretted that both Dover and Hong Kong were not scheduled in the Bill, and he hoped an Amendment would be moved, and accepted by the Government, which should include both those great works formally in the Bill. In view of the great development of naval strength among the Indo-China races of the East, and the naval power which Japan possessed now, and was likely to possess in a still greater degree in future, Hong Kong was of very great value. He did not regard Japan in any way as an enemy, she was a natural of this country, but still the great development of naval power rendered it necessary that Hong Kong should not be neglected. He welcomed the proposals of the Government in regard to Gibraltar in a most cordial spirit. Perhaps the House would allow him a small amount of congratulation upon the fact that the present proposals of the Government in regard to Gibraltar were in almost every detail the same as those recommended by the Committee over which he had had the honour of presiding at the Admiralty some six years ago. He very much regretted that these years, in the smaller portion of which the Conservative Party were in power, should have passed so far without anything having been done. [An HON. MEMBER: "1886 to 1892."] The hon. Member was in the wrong; the Report was not issued till 1889, he believed.

SIR D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked if the appointment of the Committee had not been a proof of public opinion on the subject.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, it would be unfair to charge the late Government with the delay. The hon. Gentleman and the House would recollect that other works of the very greatest importance to our naval interests existed at that time; our Fleet was exceedingly deficient, and the first necessity was to re-establish the naval supremacy of the country. There was a very considerable opposition made to the financial proposals of the Government with regard to the Fleet at the time, and that was an excuse for some of the delay. As the hon. Member for the Forest of Dean pointed out, whether we held the Mediterranean or not, Gibraltar was of first-class importance as a naval station, and the value of Gibraltar was undeniable. It was almost certain that if we should be involved in a struggle with our great naval rival the decisive sea-fight would be fought within the waters of Gibraltar, and the importance of a suitable dockyard could not therefore be over-estimated. He thought there would be many disadvantages in having a great naval station at the Scilly Islands, which would be open to bombardment from every part of the sea. The value of Portland Harbour was also very great, as a fleet stationed there would be in the best position for commanding both the great Channel harbours, Brest and Cherbourg; and with our outpost at Alderney we should be in a position to intercept any movement of our rivals. He regretted that more had not been done to place that important outpost in a position of effectual defence. He concurred in thinking the west side of Gibraltar the best place for a dock. He had had the opportunity of hearing the views of the most distinguished sailors in the British Navy on this question, and their opinion was the same. He expressed his regret that the Bill was not more definite in regard to the future, and thought the whole programme of the Government as to these works should have been set forth. No definite time had been fixed, as far as possible, for their construction. It would have been more satisfactory if the Government had had the courage to directly acknowledge that their attitude in 1889 was a mistaken one.

Mr. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.) congratulated the hon. Gentleman, and the Members of the Opposition generally on their view of the importance of the Bill. He pointed out, however, that the Bill would have gone through on two or three nights had it not been for the importance attached by hon. Members to the proposal as to one of the dockyards. He contended that the sum of £2,500 for the dockyard at Haulbowline was either too little or too much. It was extraordinary on the part of the Admiralty, whoever their advisers might be, that Haulbowline Dockyard, which cost the country £750,000, should at the present moment be practically useless as far as the Naval defences of the country went. The Admiralty should either close the place altogether or utilise it in the Naval defence of the country. They had had two or three object lessons within the past few years of the importance of maintaining Haulbowline as a dockyard repairing station. During the Naval Manœuvres of 1893, off the Irish coast, the *Apollo* and another warship were seriously damaged. They could not be repaired at Haulbowline and had to be removed to Devonport. If a hostile fleet had been off the coast this could not have been done. The ships would have been put out of action, and all because the Admiralty, with something worse than cheeseparing policy, would not recognise the value of Haulbowline as a repairing station. The first stone of the dockyard was laid 20 years ago by the present First Lord of the Admiralty, but the original specifications had never been carried out. If the Admiralty persisted in their neglect, it would be the duty of Irish Members on every available occasion to call attention to their neglect. Lord Spencer, four years ago, and since, had said the Government intended to make Haulbowline of real value and support to the Navy as a repairing and refitting station in the time of war, and to repair vessels in time of peace. In view of the repeated declarations of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the fact that £750,000 had been expended on the dockyard, the Admiralty should either frankly acknowledge that they did not intend to maintain Haulbowline Dockyard or show their readiness to make it useful in the Naval defence of the country.

Sir E. HARLAND (Belfast, N.) asked, what sized graving dock it was proposed to construct at Gibraltar? The Civil Lord of the Admiralty would appreciate the great importance of the matter in view of the enormous ships —war transports and armed cruisers— which no doubt would be called into use in the next Naval war. As to the works proposed at Dover, from the plan he had seen, he was afraid there would be nothing like sufficient room for modern warships to swing at anchor with any degree of safety or convenience. It was almost impossible to form harbours too large in view of the enormous number of vessels which would probably in future form our Channel Fleet, and which might be passing at a time. He would be glad if the Admiralty would give the House an opportunity of seeing the plans for the proposed completion at Dover Harbour.

Mr. H. E. KEARLEY (Devonport) supported the case put forward for Haulbowline Dockyard. Haulbowline was admirably situated for a Naval Station, and considering the large sum of money that had been spent on the dockyard he could not understand why the Admiralty had not kept it up in a state of efficiency. With regard to the harbour works at Dover, the Civil Lord of the Admiralty must have convinced himself of the fact that both sides of the House were determined that the works should be proceeded with forthwith. There was a strong feeling in that direction on the Mnisterial side of the House, and he believed on the other side also. He was much gratified the other day when inspecting the Gibraltar plans, to find that the director of the works had pencilled on the plans two additional docks. It was essential that Gibraltar should become a real naval base; but it could not be what it ought to be until it had a more effective equipment. By this Bill, the Government proposed to take such land and execute such works as they might deem expedient. A large part of the expenditure under the Bill would be incurred on Devonport, and the work would involve a permanent increase of the population. Owing to the system of land tenure that prevailed, there was a fearful amount of overcrowding, and the responsibility rested upon the Government to see that the people whom they brought there were properly housed. At present there were no workmen's houses, but the tenement system prevailed. The Government of the country were practically responsible for the creation of Devonport, where they occupied 200 acres of land; and they were morally bound to take cognisance of any conditions of land tenure which prevented the proper housing of the people. When they were taking powers to acquire land they ought to have in view the providing of a remedy for the evils of overcrowding that already existed, and would be aggravated by an increase of the population. Since it had become known that the Government works were to be extended, the local authorities had instituted an inquiry as to the evils that must result from further overcrowding, and if he were permitted in Committee he would state some of the results with the object of forcing the Government to recognise their responsibility.

Mr. EUGÈNE CREAN (Queen's County, Ossory), said that the thirty years of procrastination which had occurred in the development of Haulbowline was a disgrace to the Government of this country. The dockyard was started in 1865, and £150,000 was to have been spent upon it in six years, but now, thirty years afterwards, the docks were not finished. There had been great loss from bad management in Cork Harbour. The sill of a dock had to be deepened, and, when the gates came to be put in position, they were found to be worthless. This involved a loss of £12,500, and this sort of thing had been going on for thirty years. Irish Members had been silent, or they had simply asked questions to which they had received scant replies. Yet the question was one that deeply touched the Empire at large. The suitability of the place as a harbour was not disputed; it offered safety to vessels from stress of weather or from an attacking force. Boats could be protected by a line of forts so that no shots from the sea could touch them. There was no safer port in the Empire, yet the place had been boycotted to such an extent that the Irish people felt indignant: and it was possible Irish Members might come to think that the boycott was being carried a little too far. They felt it difficult to support the Government on measures for the advancement of England. They would see this Bill through, but they certainly would expect more satisfaction on this point than they had hitherto received.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston), said no doubt that Irish Members were right in insisting that the British Government ought to make up its mind whether Haulbowline was wanted or not; but he was afraid that, if the matter were to be so decided, the decision would be that, in the present condition of naval arrangements, it was not wanted. No doubt it was a first-rate geographical position, and it was a lovely situation; but it certainly seemed that Haulbowline was superfluous, and if that were the case, he put it to the Government,—what was the good of keeping it up when there was no real intention of making it effective? Before the days of machinery it was no doubt a valuable position, but in these days he doubted very much whether it was. Therefore, hon. Members below the Gangway were quite right in saying that the Government must make up their minds in the matter. Was it to be or not to be? That was the question. He thought the House was especially inclined to meet the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord—that night, because of the bright, courteous, and satisfactory manner in which he had given his explanation. He had been struck with the generous latitude that had been allowed to hon. Members to discuss works that were not in the Schedule of the Bill, such as the works at Hong Kong and Dover. Of all questions that came before the House, Naval questions were the most important. They affected not merely the wealth and welfare, but the very life of the nation. He would not, however, labour the question of Hong Kong. It had been pointed out by the late Civil Lord that the development of the power of Japan augmented the importance of Hong Kong Nor need he labour the Dover question. He believed the true reason for these works at Dover had not quite been taken in the Debate. He believed the reason was that Dover was the nearest point to the French coast in which several torpedo stations were being organised in a most effective manner, and therefore it was important that Dover should be rendered impregnable to a torpedo attack. He contended that the Schedule ought to have included these two important places, so that the whole scheme of the works might have been set forth. If Hong Kong and Dover were included, the expenditure would be some £9,000,000; and he contended that there ought to be set out in the Schedule—(1) the total cost of the works, and (2) the amount of money that was wanted for each work in the present year, to follow with the total for the present year. He had asked the Civil Lord whether any one of these works had been sanctioned by the House.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: One half have.

SIR R. TEMPLE: Then the other half have not. He wanted to know, as a matter of financial regularity, whether that was correct?

MR. ROBERTSON: About one half of the expenditure was sanctioned last year for works which were approved of for the first time in the Estimates of last year.

SIR R. TEMPLE: The question I want to press is, has each one of these works been sanctioned by this House before being included in the Schedule?

MR. ROBERTSON: No; I think that only those included in last year's Estimates can be said to have been sanctioned The rest will be sanctioned to-night.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, that was very important. Some of the works had been put into the Bill without having been previously sanctioned by the House, and it was a question whether that was regular or not. He should have thought that, before any expenditure took place, there must be a Resolution of the House, and each one of the works ought to have been sanctioned by the House. He would not, however, labour the point, and would simply submit that it was a great question whether it was not a financial irregularity. Of course, he had listened with due attention to what fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the principle of one Parliament not binding another. That was a principle on which all would agree to some extent, but there must be limitations of it. It could not apply to limitation for a short period of time. If the Government would kindly consider that, the House having undertaken any one of the works, its progress would have to be spread over so many years before completion was arrived at. The work having once begun with the sanction of this Parliament, that did bind the next Parliament to complete it. There was no more effective mode of making an obligation binding than by beginning the work. Therefore, it was all nonsense to say that one Parliament could not bind another. It was essential that there should be some such obligation, otherwise the work might not be properly completed. The argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it was objectionable to prevent a Minister from altering a policy except by Act of Parliament, because the House of Lords would have a veto on the House of Commons, did not really touch this matter. The House of Lords might veto the House of Commons to some extent, but they never vetoed a money Bill. The House of Commons might pass an Act to bind themselves, they might release themselves from that obligation and from that binding by Act of Parliament, but there would be no danger of the House of Lords vetoing them, because they never interfered on matters relating to finance and money. He might, perhaps, be allowed to make a few remarks about Gibraltar. He wished first of all to join in the chorus of congratulation to the Government for having taken this work in hand. Undoubtedly, the next Trafalgar would be fought in the waters under the Rock, and it was necessary that there should be an effective dock at Gibraltar to receive the wounded ironclads. That was plainly and absolutely necessary. Then the strategic importance of Gibraltar must also be considered. As to the idea of abandoning the Mediterranean, it was not to be thought of. We might as well abandon our Eastern Empire altogether. No man who knew India would think of abandoning Gibraltar. He was sure that his hon. friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Arnold-Forster), who had led this agitation in connection with the works at

Gibraltar, was to be especially congratulated; and he wished that his gallant friend Sir George Chesney had been alive to see the result. He could not, however, join with the hon. Member for the Holderness Division of Yorkshire (Capt. Bethell) in his views about the Spanish position. He could not conceive any one getting big guns up those hills; and the idea of being afraid of the Spanish artillery was not a little ridiculous. Besides Spain was a friendly Power towards Great Britain. He listened with interest to the remarks made by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) who spoke on these subjects with great authority; and he was thankful to hear the right hon. Gentleman lend his great authority on the question of Gibraltar. The right hon. Gentleman said that though much had been done still more remained to be done; and as he knew the Rock of Gibraltar well the right hon. Gentleman had informed the House that those plans which were good as far as they went were not enough. But the Civil Lord said that if the House wanted more the Government would be glad to consider the recommendations; and this so far was satisfactory. The House, indeed, wanted to see Gibraltar put in the position of a real harbour of refuge and centre for our ironclads. No doubt the Admiralty were well advised by naval experts in determining to devote their efforts to the west side of the rock rather than to the east. In the meantime let the west side be completed and the east side would come hereafter. Civilians without official information could not of course offer any conclusive criticism on details; and no doubt the Government would take what had been said into consideration. What they could do, however, was to encourage the Government in doing right as regarded all naval affairs. They could assure the Government of their support in the performance of that duty, and the support of public opinion in the constituencies. Thus they would be able to give the Government that national encouragement in making our Navy supreme, and all our naval stations impregnable from one end of the globe to the other.

Mr. R. W. HANBURY (Preston) said, that with regard to Haulbowline he thought the Irish members, as well as the British taxpayer, had a fair cause for complaint. Either the Admiralty ought to make Haulbowline a serviceable yard or abolish it altogether. At present they were doing neither the one thing nor the other. It was a yard of all others where half-measures had done the most mischief, and the result ought to be a serious warning as to delaying works in the future. It was indeed an object-lesson as to the necessity of beginning works at once and of finishing them within a definite time. He heartily congratulated the Government on their naval policy this Session. The Government, at any rate, had this Session taken the Navy out of the lines of mere party policy, and any party which adopted the line they had now pursued were adopting a thoroughly popular policy. Speaking for a manufacturing town in Lancashire he said that his constituents and others interested in our commerce would take the deepest interest in the welfare of our Navy. As to the mode in which the money was to be provided, he did not much care. His concern was that the money was to be spent on these definite objects. But although he was heartily glad that the money was being spent, he did not think that the Government had taken sufficient security against waste and delay. The Government were especially to be commended for undertaking a class of expenditure—works which had been too much neglected by the Governments of the last 10 or 15 years. The tonnage of the Fleet had doubled in the last 15 years, and the number of men had increased 50 per cent.; but within the same period the annual expenditure on works had hardly increased at all. The average expenditure had not been £500,000 a year. It was no good looking after only a portion of the needs of the Navy. Ships, men, and works must be carried on side by side, and for the first time these three essentials were likely to proceed abreast. As to the particular mode of raising the money, no doubt the Government, in proposing a loan, were acting quite properly. The works to which the money was to be devoted had been neglected by previous Governments; and therefore there was some claim to throw a portion of the burden on future years. Moreover, permanent works such as these differed largely in their character from the mere building of ships. But he wished that the House were not legislating so much in the dark, and that they had more details of the expenditure. The Government were not following precedent in this matter, for in the Act of 1860 the schedule not only gave such useful details as the station, district, and name of the work, and the estimated cost of the whole, but it also gave year by year the amount expended up to date, the amount to be spent in the current year, and the further sum required. If such particulars were supplied in the present case, they would go far to satisfy the requirements of hon. Members. He hoped that it would be possible to introduce some limit of time into the Bill; for the last few years had shown that the work which was done quickly was as a rule done most economically and efficiently. That was the reason of the great advance which this country had made over foreign nations in regard to ships. If these works were allowed to hang on year after year, they would cost two or three times as much as if they were proceeded with steadily and finished within a definite time. He did not quite agree with what had been said as to not binding future Parliaments to carry on the works. The commencement of works threw on any future Parliament, which did not wish to go on with the works, the onus of wasting all the money which had been spent; and, as no Parliament would be foolish enough to do that, practically the initiation of the works did bind future Parliaments. But in respect of a portion only of the work was such an obligation on the future imposed. The total sum required was £9,000,000, but this Bill only referred to £4,500,000, to which Parliament had already pledged itself in the Estimates of last year. With regard to the other £4,500,000 which concerned some of the most important of the works, there was absolutely no guarantee but the bare promise of the Government. On Hong Kong, Dover, and the Portsmouth Barracks not a single shilling was being spent this year, to pledge their continuance. The Government, no doubt, intended to carry out their provision, but it would have been satisfactory if, either in the Estimates or in this Bill, certain small sums had been expended to bind Parliament to go on with the works. The opinion expressed on all sides of the House had been that this Bill was not large enough, but that all these important works ought to be carried out at once. He knew that the Civil Lord had made certain promises, and hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House recognised in the Civil Lord a patriotic Minister, who in his position had done as much as most Civil Lords for a long time. They did not grudge him his meed of praise, but they hoped that he would do his best in the very important Bill not to let these works hang on. The Civil Lord said that all these works were of urgent importance. Then why should some be taken and others left? Why should they not all be included in the present Bill and be begun this year? The Civil Lord had suggested that it would be possible to introduce Amendments into the Bill suggesting that the works at Dover and Hong Kong should be proceeded with at once. But the House could not increase the total sum of £1,000,000 provided by the Bill, except on the proposition of the responsible Government; and if further works were to be undertaken at once, the sum available would have to be considerably increased, unless the works already provided for were neglected, and that was not desired. They did not want to substitute these works for anything else; they wanted to add them to the works proposed in the Bill, and surely they were works of very considerable importance. He was particularly astonished that the work at Dover should be postponed, because the question of its construction had been before the country so long. In 1886 the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was anxious the work should be proceeded with, and he (Mr. Hanbury) confessed he did not understand the reasons the Civil Lord had given for postponing the works. The first reason was that in all the other places where works had to be carried on there were works already in progress, but at Hong Kong and at Dover there were no works going on at present. He did not see how that bore on the question. Inasmuch as the works at Dover had been under consideration so long, sufficient surveys must have been taken to permit of operations being begun at once. Aware as he was that great works were being constructed upon the northern coast of France, he was convinced that no more important work could be taken in hand than that suggested at Dover. As to Hong Kong, surely, in view of what had happened in that part of the Pacific within the last few months, it was unwise not to hurry on as best we could with the naval works. A great change of power was taking place in those regions, Japan was becoming a great naval Power, and we did not know whether she would be our friend or enemy. He also wished to impress on the Government what was so well said by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, namely, the importance of the dock accommodation at Gibraltar being a thorough work. If there were a great naval engagement near Gibraltar, one dock there would be of no practical use. Sir William White and other authorities had shown that with our great ironclads we were making a great experiment; that the first battle between two great Powers would be an experiment on a great scale. They had also expressed the opinion that most of the ships would be so damaged that they would have to go into dock. Would it not be monstrous if our ironclads had to come all the way to England for repairs? Surely the Government who had already shown their patriotism would not refuse to listen to the practically unanimous appeal which had been made to them to undertake work in the directions he had specified. He believed that in putting pressure on the Government in this matter hon. Members were representing the opinions of the constituencies in every part of the country. He hoped the Government would make this Bill, which was a very good one, a thorough Bill, and one which would meet all the requirements of the case.

Mr. A. B. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said, the nominal expenditure under the Bill would be £5,000,000 sterling, but according to the estimates before the House the proposed works would cost something over £8,000,000 sterling. Members of the House who had had any experience of great harbour works in the country were thoroughly aware of the constant under-estimates that were made in such hydraulic works. Only recently one undertaking was estimated to cost £7,000,000 sterling, but before it was completed—and it was not completed yet—upwards of £15,000,000 sterling would have been spent. Before the House engaged in these great works with a light heart they ought to have from the Government fuller information than they now had as to how the plans had been drawn, as to who had been consulted, and as to what the estimates for the construction of the works were. He had a very high opinion of the abilities of the professional adviser of the Admiralty; but in this instance barracks were to be erected in one direction, dry docks, docks and breakwaters were to be constructed in other directions, and he did not think it possible for one gentleman situated as the Director of Works was to give the care and attention to such works which were really requisite if the nation were to get value for their money. Therefore, he would be glad to have an assurance from the Civil Lord that the Admiralty, before undertaking the construction of all those works, would call in the assistance of some engineer of eminence, who would, at any rate, relieve the Director of Works of some of the overseeing of those undertakings. There was another point in connection with this matter upon which he would like to have a word from the Civil Lord. It was of importance that the House, before parting with the Bill, should know how the proposed works were going to be constructed. Were the works to be undertaken by the Department, as in times past, with the assistance of convict labour — which experience had shown to be the most costly of all labour—or were tenders to be invited for their construction? His own hope was that as large a portion as possible of those works would be carried out by contract. He did not think the House fully realised the magnitude of the works the Government were about to commence. Take, for example, the extension of the docks at Keyham. The outer-sea wall of that basin—1,800 feet, or 600 yards long—would be, from the foundation to the coping, something like 80 feet. That illustration would give the House some idea of the character, extent, and importance of the works. Attached to that basin there were large graving-docks, which, as the Civil Lord had said, would, so far as the Admiralty could look ahead, suit all future warships. But between the graving-docks proposed to be constructed and the existing basin, there was what was called a tidal basin of eight acres; and he would like to suggest that these eight acres should be added to the proposed basin where war vessels were to be moored, which, in addition to providing additional accommodation for the war vessels, would save something like 700 feet of walling, which was an expensive item in the construction of docks. The next point was in connection with the Bill itself. The Bill provided for £1,000,000 being voted for those works; but only £100,000 of that amount might be spent this year. There was no provision in the Bill as to the time within which the money should be spent. If there was one object more than another that ought to be aimed at in connection with the system of borrowing money for constructing works out of capital, it was the acceleration of the completion of the works. It was a most unfortunate procedure on the part of the Government, whenever they undertook a big work, that the amount voted year after year was not regulated, as it ought to be regulated, by what would push on the work most quickly and in the most economical manner, but was regulated solely by what the Treasury could spare for the work. The result was, that the completion of great public works undertaken by Departments, was protracted for an indefinite time. For instance, the works at Chatham on which £2,000,000 were spent were commenced as far back as 1855, and were not completed until 1885, or 30 years afterwards. The works at Portsmouth, which cost £2,250,000, also took 30 years, or from 1864 to 1894, to complete. He had not the slightest doubt that had those works been left to contractors they would have taken, not 30 years, but at the utmost seven years. He believed the policy of introducing this Bill and constructing works under the system of loans produced an improvement upon the old rate of progress, but he should have liked to have seen some time limit, and some security given to the House that when it voted the money every effort should be made to expend the sum so voted and the works rapidly pushed on to completion. This would ensure that they should not have a vast amount of capital lying dormant because the works were in a slow state of progression. Allusion had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the supposed fact that by the introduction of this Bill a control was afforded to Parliament over the expenditure, whilst the right hon. Gentleman stated that it did not bind future Parliaments. But if those works were to be carried out by contract—and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that contracts were not prohibited—and contracts were entered into for the construction of works like those, say at Keyham, he should like to know what control Parliament could have in that case. It was mere pedantry to suggest that Parliament would have control over the expenditure once it had entered into a contract for the construction of any of these large works. Another practical point to which he desired to call attention was the importance of estimates. All they had set out in the schedule of the Bill was a sum of money allocated for the first expenditure on each of these works. There was no allusion made to the estimated full cost of the works. He thought he was right in saying that all well-organised railway undertakings, which had great works to carry out before they would consent to a single sixpence being expended, required their engineer to table his estimated cost; and once he had given in that estimate of cost he could not obtain one sixpence more for expenditure over the estimate without giving full particulars and bringing the matter up from the special authority of his board of directors. They wanted in connection with these great naval works something analogous to such a system as he had described, so that Parliament might have a real control over the work as it went on. There were certain omissions from this Bill to which allusion had already been made in the course of the Debate. With regard to the proposed harbour at Dover, whilst there had been no absolute promise, enough had been said to lead to the belief that it was likely to be included in the Bill. It was important that a prompt conclusion should be come to as to whether a harbour was to be constructed at Dover or not, and for this reason: some four years ago one of the great railway companies having its terminus at that port inquired whether the Admiralty had any intention of carrying out the harbour proposed some 50 years ago, stating that if there was not such intention it would be necessary for them to do something to improve it for the purpose of their cross-channel traffic. Not receiving the assurance they desired, certain railway companies obtained a Bill for the construction of a pier for their own purposes. If the large harbour scheme was to be carried out by the Government the work proposed by the railway companies would be unnecessary, and there might be an opportunity of entering into negotiations with the companies by which they might pay the money which they had contemplated expending to the Government in aid of the great harbour work. It was, therefore, important that this question should be promptly considered. Of course, if the Dover Harbour were included in the Bill it would have to be looked at from a different point of view from that taken 50 years ago—the system of navigation, the size of ships, and all arrangements for naval warfare being perfectly different now from what they were half-a-century since. He was quite sure that when the matter came to be taken up that regard would be had to the exposure of the site, to the tremendous gales and heavy seas, and to the great silting that took place all along the coast around Dover. He thought it was a pity that the improvements were not made at Hong Kong. There was no doubt they were very much required, and would have been put in hand long ago had the new system of capitalising the cost of new works been adopted at an earlier date. Disagreeing with the hon. Member for King's Lynn, he regretted the omission of any provision for further barrack accommodation at Portsmouth. He could not think we did anything to improve the *morale* or the seamanship of our sailors by having them living in old wooden huts in the harbour at Portsmouth, and alike in the interests of the men and of the public service, the men should be housed in barracks on shore. He hoped the Civil Lord would not leave out this question of barrack accommodation at Portsmouth. The last omission was the Dockyard at Pembroke. It was a dockyard where work was done economically and well, but, unfortunately, vessels had to be towed round to Devonport to complete, and this was disadvantageous and not economical. If £100,000 could be found out of the large expenditure proposed for the improvement of Pembroke Dockyard, there would be a considerable economy effected in the completing and fitting up of ships at that port. They were embarking in an unknown expenditure, and no Member need be surprised if it ran up to £13,000,000 or £15,000,000; but, having put their hand to the plough, there must be no turning back. By carrying on the works at the most rapid rate they would ensure the truest economy.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) protested against the financial arrangements of the Bill, the real explanation of which was the incautious declarations made by the Government when in opposition. It was quite clear that the plan which had been adopted had taken the control of Parliament practically away. The system on which the money was to be spent, as between contractors and the Admiralty itself, was an important condition. The House should know, roughly speaking, how much of the money was to be expended by contractors and how much by the Admiralty, and, considering that the expenditure was to go to all parts of the world, surely it was reasonable some scheme should be submitted showing the principle on which the money was to be expended. The Bill was not in any sense a general scheme which the Government could be regarded as placing before the House. They heard of great works, but no details were given as to how these works were to be carried out and completed. There was no definite programme with a settled principle which would enable the House to know that these measures would be carried out. They were all agreed that their Navy had been strengthened, but he would ask, if the Government were opposed so strongly to the Naval Defences Act, why had they not put before the House their whole plan? The fact was, they felt they had no guarantee that the scheme would ever be carried out. Why did not the Government carry the scheme out in a straightforward manner? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, "What right have you to bind a future Government?" That sounded very well as a statement on a platform when they wanted to delude those they were talking to. But if this idea were carried out of never pledging their predecessors it would be impossible for a Government to enter into a contract beyond twelve months. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" was a sound principle, but they could not act on it in Government. According to this principle they could not build a ship or a barracks unless it was finished in the twelve months. It was a fiction and a delusion on which no sound finance or business could be done. It was, as an hon. Member had said, a pedantic system of finance. As to the contention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—that the House might change its mind and refuse to sanction the expenditure which a previous Government had approved of—that was possible, but it was improbable. The country had made up its mind to a certain Naval programme, and to the expenditure of a large sum of money, and was it to be supposed it would suddenly change its mind? Therefore he held that the Government should openly face the position. The Bill provided no time limit of any kind; and it depended upon the future whether the proposed works would ever be carried out at all. There was nothing in the Bill to prevent the Government postponing any one of the items, and possibly them all. The Government had themselves pointed to the works at Dover and Hong Kong as urgent and necessary, but they were not included in this programme, simply because the Government thought they could put them off as they had done before. And even if an amendment to include these works were moved in Committee, they would only be robbing Peter to pay Paul. From the financial standpoint, and as a matter of serious business, the provisions of the Bill were not satisfactory. With regard to Haulbowline Dock, if it was not wanted the sooner they stopped spending money on it the better. Under the present Bill it was proposed to expend £2,500, out of an expenditure of a million, on that dock.

MR. ROBERTSON: Nothing more could be done there.

MR. BARTLEY said, that if all that was required was £2,500, that could have come out of the ordinary Estimates; but it had been put into the Bill in order to satisfy Irish votes. To spend £2,500 on dredging was really not doing anything for the dock at all. He did not see why the House should go on spending this money on this dock. If expenditure was necessary, let the House face the question boldly, and grant whatever was necessary. The whole muddle in the financial arrangements of the Bill was due to the obstinacy of the Government in declining to adopt the system which the late Government adopted in the Naval Defence Act. He was sure that when the Accounts came before the Public Accounts Committee, there would be an infinite number of questions raised upon this system. All this could have been avoided if they only had had some systematic arrangement for the whole Programme of the Government. The country had determined that the Navy should be fully equipped, and the Government had accepted that position. Why could they not have the courage of their opinions, and put the whole thing in one Bill, so that they might be tied down, not only to begin, but to finish the different works? If that were done he was sure that the Government would carry the country with them; but as it was, this sort of piecemeal work would always be unsatisfactory, and he believed that the Government only stuck to it because they wished to have a back-door to escape, in case of urgency, from the scheme which they had adopted.

Mr. ROBERTSON said, he could only speak again by the indulgence of the House. In answer to the hon. Baronet the Member for Belfast, he might say that the extreme length of the dry dock at Gibraltar was to be 580ft., the width at entrance 94ft., and the depth of water on sill at ordinary spring tides 35½ft. [Sir E. Harland: "Five hundred and eighty feet is absurdly short."] Any representations of that sort would be considered. The question of what use was to be made of Haulbowline Yard was far too large for him to attempt to deal with upon the present occasion, but there would be an opportunity for raising that question hereafter. With reference to the question of how much of the new work was to be contract work, and how much Admiralty work, he might state that the works at Gibraltar and Portland Harbour would be done by Admiralty contract labour. About half the dredging would be Admiralty work, and the rest of it contract work. With these three exceptions—Gibraltar, Portland, and half the dredging—the whole of the work mentioned in the Bill would be given out to private contract.

Mr. HANBURY pointed out that there would be two systems going on at Gibraltar at the same time, because the work now being done there was contract work.

Mr. ROBERTSON explained that the small amount of that work at present being done there would soon be finished. The suggestion to make Pembroke Yard a finishing depôt had been under consideration before and had been rejected, though he did not deny that there was something in the suggestion to make Pembroke more complete. He could only promise that the matter should receive further consideration. He hoped that the House would now give the Bill a Second Reading.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) thought the statement as to Gibraltar was very scanty and unsatisfactory. The proposed dock was very far too short for practical purposes, and there were already two ships in the pay of the Admiralty which could not get into the dock; while in the future there would most likely be others in the same predicament. The battle had been fought over this dry dock since 1884. He had always advocated the erection of dry docks, and he was much surprised to learn that the length of the one at Gibraltar was to be 580 feet. He thought that the Government, with the present feeling of the country on this subject, might have suggested a sum sufficient for the erection of a proper dry dock at Gibraltar. Although the Civil Lord had stated very properly that he would consider the objections raised to the length of the dock, he must know already that increased length, having regard to the position where this dry dock was being made, would involve a large increase of expenditure, because at the place chosen by the Government there was a very high rock. But there were other matters in connection with Gibraltar to which the attention of the House ought to have been drawn before it was asked to pass this Bill. The measure had been submitted to the House without any explanation of the principles involved. On the financial principles not a word was said by the Government until the Chancellor of the Exchequer was forced to reply this evening to the criticisms of the noble Lord, the late First Lord of the Admiralty. He wanted to know what was to be the depth of water enclosed by the new flying breakwater and the extension of the new mole. The depth of the water was a very important matter, and no information had been given them on the point. When the extension of the new mole was talked of, he wished to know whether, with that extension, facilities were to be provided for the coaling of steamers. Were facilities for coaling to be provided in connection with the new flying extension that was to be made, or was it to be merely a new breakwater? Then, had the Government considered the alternative schemes that had been before them for the past 10 years? Had they considered the canal scheme, and the scheme relating to the eastern face of the rock? [Mr. E. Robertson: "It has been all answered already."] These points had not been all answered. [Mr. E. Robertson: "I referred to the portion of the eastern side of the rock."] The hon. Member had made an observation which would lead the House to suppose that all these questions had been answered, whereas they had not been all answered. The canal scheme had not even been referred to by the Government speakers. The Government knew very well that in adopting the scheme for a dry dock in the parade ground, as it was called, they were adopting a scheme which was very expensive, which was incapable of future expansion, and which could only provide one dock. He thought that the Government ought to have told them something about those other schemes which were not open to the same objections, and ought to have given some special reasons for constructing this particular dry dock which was to cost something like £300,000. These were very grave omissions from the list of works for which provision was to be made. There was the omission of such important works as those at Dover and Hong Kong, and there was no mention of improvements in ports in the Far East of the Mediterranean. Two months ago in this House, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered a speech foreshadowing an intention to give up our hold on the Eastern Mediterranean. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman afterwards took the first available opportunity to withdraw that speech, and he was, therefore, surprised to find that no mention was made in these works estimates of any works in the Eastern Mediterranean, where a very small expenditure would provide us at all events with a secure harbour for our Fleet in sight of Famagusta. He knew that some people who did not realise the dangers of their proposal, thought that our best policy would be to abandon the Mediterranean. But if, from pusillanimous advice, we should be induced to withdraw from the Mediterranean, what hold had we on the Atlantic? He could state on the highest Naval authority, and from his own personal observation, that we did not possess a properly-equipped Naval base between Devonport and Cape Town, and if war broke out there would not be a single port where coal and stores could be replenished or ships repaired over that very nearly 7,000 miles of Atlantic Ocean, the only remaining route to our great Possessions in South Africa, to Australia, to India, and the Far East. The House would appreciate the importance of this statement when he said that the modern battleship only carried coal sufficient for three weeks' effective cruising, and no such vessel could proceed 3,000 miles for effective service unless it could have recourse to a reliable coaling base. He regarded this as a neglect of Imperial and Naval interests. The works set out in this Bill had never been properly explained to the country, and he believed that not only experts, but the general public, would not feel much confidence in what the Government were about to do from the explanations they had offered to the

House that night. As to the financial principles of the Bill, his noble Friend the late First Lord made a speech in which he advanced four criticisms on the Bill, and the effort which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made to answer them only showed how weak was the case of the Government in regard to this part of the measure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer advanced several contentions which appeared to him to be contradictory in themselves and of one another. The right hon. Gentleman said it was not a sound policy to allow finance in Naval and Military matters to be subject to the control of the House of Lords, and in almost the same breath he said the only sound policy was to introduce an annual Bill for this purpose. If that meant anything, it meant that annually they were to put their Naval policy, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman, at the mercy of the House of Lords. That was one contradiction. Then the right hon. Gentleman said it was a mistake to suppose that a loan would be appealed to as a financial measure on the plea of urgency. The only legitimate justification for a loan, he said, was because the money was intended for permanent works; but his main financial principle was that the needs of the year must be got out of the funds of the year. Here was a Bill which professed to be a Loan Bill, because it was for permanent works, and yet in its very principle it was to be an annual Bill to take the money of the year for the work of the year in order to pay for permanent works which ought to be paid for by a permanent loan. The noble Lord argued that there ought to be a time limit in any expenditure of this kind, but he had not heard from any Member of the Treasury Bench why there should not be a time limit, and he thought his noble friend who had made this criticism deserved a substantial reply on that point. Then the right hon. Gentleman had told them that it was no use taking the total cost, because they must from year to year provide funds for the work which was to go on. But if they were in any way to charge posterity with the continuance of these works they left it to posterity to say that the works might be stopped at any moment. The money spent upon these works would, unless they were continued, be absolutely thrown away. He thought it would have been more practical and businesslike if the Government had explained to them that these various works would cost so much money. He found that they provided for a million sterling of expenditure, leaving the country saddled with a further expenditure of five millions and a half, if the first expenditure was to have any effect at all. It was a great pity that the whole matter could not have been discussed at greater length. In one of the classes the Admiralty was enabled to transfer from one head to another in the schedule, without the control or approval of the House, large sums of money. The consequence was, that the million which it was proposed to spend on 11 different items might all be spent upon one item. He contended that that was a breach of their best financial traditions, and there were other matters in the Bill which would also require their close scrutiny in Committee. On the whole he wished to congratulate the Government on having boldly followed in the steps of their predecessors so far as they dared. He could only regard the Bill, however, as a half-hearted, halting, and inadequate attempt on the part of the Government to follow in the wise financial course pursued by their predecessors.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, the view he took might be put in the form of an analogy. In a Committee of the House dealing with a project brought forward by a private adventurer, a statement of the whole expenditure required had to be given, and the private adventurer was expected to take powers to incur that whole expenditure; if he did not the Committee was not likely to pass the Bill. The House ought to have the whole scheme before it, so that the details might be discussed. The result of the mode of dealing which the Government had adopted was, that the House could only imperfectly consider the schemes under which the money was proposed to be lent. When they came another year and offered any criticisms upon the scheme, they would, he supposed, be told that they sanctioned the scheme because they sanctioned the expenditure for the first part. As guardians of the public purse they were bound to protest against this method of dealing with public funds.

MR. WILSON LLOYD (Wednesbury) said, the schedule of the proposed expenditure was very meagre. He agreed that the House ought to have more complete information before it. He wished to ask why it was that in this scheme so large a proportion of the money was to be spent outside England. They were told—and they all knew it—that England was "the predominant partner" of the United Kingdom. Yet under this scheme England, which found a great part of the money, would not have the benefit of the expenditure of the money in this country. From the point of view of popularity, he should have thought the Government would have spent the money in the country in which they desired popularity. But what did the House find? They found that the first item of expenditure in the schedule was to be spent outside the United Kingdom—at Gibraltar: £275,000, more than a quarter of the whole sum, was to be spent in Gibraltar. Surely the Government must know the depressed state of the labour market in England at the present time. It had been said and even promised that we were to give up Gibraltar. A time might come when we should give it up as a naval station. He hoped not, for he should deplore it. But it was often suggested that Gibraltar should be given up. They all knew that, after spending a million of money on important defences and fortifications on the Ionian Islands, those islands were given up. The ex-Prime Minister advocated the giving up of the Ionian Islands, and they were given up after a million of money had been spent there. However desirable it might be to spend £275,000 for Gibraltar, the money should be spent in England. [*Ministerial Cries of* "Divide!"] Yes; those cries were their argument. Expenditure for Ireland and Gibraltar, but not for the benefit of the British taxpayer. If a Member on the Opposition side of the House said, "We want this money spent in England," they cried, "Divide!" and thought it out of order. England was the predominant partner, and he did not know why £275,000 should be spent in Gibraltar, and £250,000 in Ireland, leaving less than half to be spent in England, where most of the money would have to be found, and the labour market was sorely in need of employment. The defence of this country might be improved by the construction of a ship canal from the east coast to the west, which would enable us to transfer our naval force from one to the other as circumstances might render necessary. Above all things, let us employ labour at home, and spend money at home, and so improve the condition of our own working classes; and this the construction of the suggested canal would do.

MR. J. C. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) urged that, however much money might be spent upon dock accommodation for our shipping at Gibraltar and elsewhere, it would be of little use if ships never arrived to be docked. Amongst the many dangers to which shipping was exposed, perhaps the greatest was the danger of running upon a derelict. This danger has only recently been reported as close to Gibraltar, where it is proposed to spend so large a sum for two docks. The Secretary of the Admiralty having, in reply to a question on the subject, admitted that a large floating derelict had been swept through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean from the Atlantic Ocean, the Government would be seriously compromised if so great a danger were not captured or destroyed.

Bill read 2°.

## CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On the resumption of the Adjourned Debate on the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill, it was proposed to postpone the Order to Monday, the 22nd instant.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked when the Government intended to bring in the Bill?

MR. ASQUITH: It would be the second Order on the Monday.

DR. CLARK said, that meant it would be again reached at midnight.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) protested against the way this Bill was being put off. Scotch Members had been kept waiting on the chance of the Order being reached that night, and now they were to be hurried back on the Monday that the House reassembled on the same chance. He moved that the Bill be put down for the Thursday.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire) seconded that Amendment.

Mr. ASQUITH said, he hoped the Amendment would not be persisted in. The Government strongly desired to bring in the Bill. As a Scotch Member he was himself interested in it. They were pledged to bring on the Factories Bill immediately after the Recess, and would put this Bill down next.

Mr. T. H. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, that it would be an inconvenience to him as a Scotch Member to return on the Monday.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON said, it had been usual to take Estimates on the first day after a Recess.

It being now midnight, the Debate stood adjourned, and the Order was put down for Monday the 22nd.

## THE METROPOLITAN POLICE (RECEIVER) BILL.

Read 3°, and passed.

## GROCERS' LICENCES ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. D. A. Thomas, Bill to abolish the Retail Sale of Spirits, Wine, and Beer by Shopkeepers in England and Wales.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday 23rd April, and to be printed. [Bill 207.]

## INSTITUTIONS FOR IDIOTS (EXEMPTION FROM RATES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr Round, Bill to exempt from Poor and other Local Rates all Registered Institutions for the Care, Training, and Education of Idiots and Imbeciles.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 208.]

## SCOTCH BUSINESS.

On Motion for the Adjournment of the House,

Dr. CLARK asked the Government what they intended to do with reference to the Crofters Bill for Scotland. The Scotch Members were being brought down night after night for this Bill, and it was always being postponed. Would the Government make it a second Order on a Monday or a Thursday before public business, or would they give some information as to the course they intended to pursue? Scotch business was as important as Welsh, Irish, or English business, and the Scotch Members were not going to take the leavings of the Government.

Mr. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked whether the Crofters Bill was in future to have precedence of the Scotch Local Government Bill.

Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN earnestly joined in the appeal made by the hon. Member for Caithness. He hoped the Government would consider, not merely the better progress of Scotch business, but the greater convenience of the Scotch night; and that would be served if the Government could state to-morrow whether the Bill would be taken as the First Order on the Thursday after the House re-assembled.

Mr. ASQUITH said, with reference to the question of the hon. Member opposite, the Crofters Bill would be taken before the Scotch Local Government Bill, as the Government regarded it as the first Scotch business of the Session. As to the question of the hon. Member for Caithness, if the Bill to which he referred was, unfortunately, not read on the Monday night after the Adjournment, as the Government hoped that it would be, then it would be taken as the First Order on the following Thursday.

The House adjourned at a Quarter past Twelve o'clock.

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On the conclusion of the Sitting, Mr. Asquith, and other occupants of the Front Benches, took leave of Mr. Speaker by shaking hands with him. As Mr. Speaker was leaving the Chair a cheer was raised throughout the House, to which the right hon. Gentleman bowed his acknowledgments. During the discussion on the Naval Works Bill, the attendance of Members was comparatively small, but throughout the evening a constant succession of Members took leave of Mr. Speaker while he occupied the Chair for the last time.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, 10th April 1895.*

At noon, when the only business before the House was the election of a new SPEAKER, in succession to Mr. PEEL, the Chamber was crowded in every part.

## THE ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS (Mr. H. D. ERSKINE) came, and brought the Mace, and laid it under the Table.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby), addressing himself to the Clerk of the House (who, standing up, pointed to him, and then sat down) said: Sir Reginald Palgrave,—I have it in command from Her Majesty to acquaint this House that the Queen, having been informed of the resignation of the Right Honourable ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL, late Speaker of the House of Commons, gives leave to the House to proceed forthwith to the choice of the new Speaker.

MR. SAMUEL WHITBREAD (South Beds), who was received with cheers, said: I rise for the purpose of proposing—

> "That Mr. William Court Gully, Member for Carlisle, take the Chair of this House as Speaker."

["Hear, hear!"] To a House of Commons that has had the experience which the present House has now acquired, I think it is needless that I should take up time in endeavouring to sketch the qualities and the gifts which we expect in our Speaker. That was done last night in admirable terms by the Leader of the House. [*Cheers.*] I may at once say that I think the example which this House has had before it of the daily exercise of the highest qualities which can adorn that Chair has impressed upon all of us a sense of what gifts are required, what qualities are demanded, better than any words. [*Cheers.*] I regret to learn that, upon this occasion, that practice which has now happily endured for more than half-a-century is likely to be broken, and that the selection of those who form a majority of this House is to be questioned. ["Hear, hear!"] I regret it for this reason—that it has always seemed to me—and, indeed, upon high authority, it has often been stated—that the unanimous voice of the House lends authority to the Chair. [*Cheers.*] On that ground alone I regret that a contest is likely to take place. But whoever is selected we can remember that the choice is the choice of the House; and I do not doubt that that choice will be followed by a full measure of that confidence and support which we owe to our Speaker. [*Cheers.*] It has been said, and well said, that in electing a Speaker of this House we appoint not a master, but a servant, of the House. True, but a trusted and honoured servant, to whose hands we commit great powers, whom we charge with grave responsibilities; and, indeed, it seems to me that it would be a base and lamentable failure on our part if, having thus made him our Minister, we withheld from him a full measure of that loyal confidence which alone is the source of, and alone can maintain, his authority. [*Cheers.*] I have no fear myself that we shall in any way fail in our duty in that respect. This is not a new Parliament. We have had experience of its ways; and I think that ready submission to our Speaker, that instant rally in support of the Chair, to which we are accustomed is not a mere habit of obedience. It is with us who have been here any time an instinct of self-preservation—[*Cheers*]—because we know and we realise all too well that, without the support of our Speaker, the conduct of public affairs in Parliament would be impossible. But, hearing that there is to be a contest on this occasion, it becomes necessary that I should ask myself what are the objections which are to be raised to my hon. Friend. Possibly it may be said that he has not that long experience of Parliament which some would desire. [*Opposition Cheers.*] It will be said, perhaps, that some one ought to have been selected who had greater knowledge of the practice of Parliament. [*Opposition Cheers.*] Let us go back a little. Let us go back to the last occasion upon which there was a contest in this House for a Speaker. That was in 1839, when Mr. Shaw Lefevre was proposed, and exactly the same objection was raised to

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

him. It was said that Mr. Goulburn had a much longer experience of the House and a greater knowledge of its practice. Mr. Shaw Lefevre had been but nine years in Parliament — precisely the same time, I believe, as my hon. Friend the Member for Carlisle. [*Cheers.*] But the House of Commons, believing that they saw in Mr. Shaw Lefevre the gifts which go to make a great Speaker, disregarded that objection, although much had been urged by such an authority as Mr. Wynn, and supported by Mr. Wilson Patten. The choice they made was ratified by succeeding Parliaments and by both Parties for a period of 18 years. [*Cheers.*] But, in truth, there are considerations even of more vital importance than a close acquaintance of our rules. Knowledge of our practice may be acquired. What we desire also, what seems to me to be of the greatest importance, is, that we should select one with an evenly-balanced mind; that he should have that ever-present courtesy which, to use Lord John Russell's words, "enables him to conciliate even those it is his duty to reprove;" that he should have not only firmness and decision, but the self-reliance that comes to a man who has learnt to make his own mark in life and to depend upon himself. [*Cheers.*] These qualities, coupled with the desire to be fair and impartial in all circumstances—those are qualities which cannot be picked up; they must be innate and possessed. [*Cheers.*] But what other objection could be raised to my hon. Friend? Are we going back to the old cry, raised, I think, at the very beginning of this century, that in better times it was the custom to select a Speaker from the landed interest. [*Opposition Cries of* "Oh, oh!" A voice: "Very bad form," and *Counter Cheers.*] Are we going back to that? That was an objection which was raised in this House on more than one occasion; and another objection was, that the candidate in 1801 was in the profession of the Law. Does any man now think that the profession of the Law unfits one from taking the Chair of this House? If he does I can recommend him to read what Mr. Pitt said on that occasion. He found that the study of the Law, and the consequent study of our Constitution, and the habits of business and application and industry which that profession requires, so far from being an objection, in reality was the strongest recommendation to a candidate for the the Chair. [*Cheers.*] Happily, my hon. Friend's powers have been tested in that arena. I hope some one better qualified than myself may say a word upon that subject; but this much I do say, without fear of contradiction, that no man can look back with more full and entire satisfaction to a career carved out by himself, that no man has made better, more sincere, more lasting friendships among his colleagues, and no one has earned a wider respect. [*Cheers.*] There is one advantage which my hon. Friend will have if he is elected by this House—that he has not, whilst he has been here, thrown himself into the heat of Party conflict. As long as he has been within these walls he has raised no animosities and stirred no bitter feeling. ["Hear, hear!"] And believing that he possesses the high character and the qualities which are demanded for this great Office; believing, as I do, that, if elected, he will be able to look upon the House of Commons from a plane above the passing interests of Party and the conflicts of the hour; and, believing that he will be able worthily to maintain our privileges and to hand down our great traditions,—I beg to move: "That Mr. William Court Gully do take the Chair of this House." [*Cheers.*]

MR. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL (Fife, W.), who was received with cheers, said: Sir Reginald Palgrave,—The great weight and authority belonging to the hon. Member for South Bedford happily relieve me from the task of saying anything about the greatness and dignity of the high Office of State which we meet to-day to fill. It will leave me free to devote the very few observations I am about to make to a subject on which a friendship of five-and-twenty years has at least qualified me to speak—namely, the high character, the spotless reputation, and marked ability of the hon. Member for Carlisle, and his eminent fitness to be the Speaker of this House. [*Cheers.*] I am, I know, addressing some men at all events on both sides of the House who have known the hon. Member longer than I have; and I know that, on whichever side of the House they sit, those who know him are of one mind, that he is qualified even for this high Office. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Member is a lawyer, and if by chance in the vote to-day our choice should prove to be on him, it will not be the first lawyer who has been called to that Chair. And it would indeed be a strange thing if to have devoted the best years of life, as he has done, to the study of the laws of this realm; if to have been called upon, as he has been, on countless occasions, to preside over inquiries involving questions of great nicety and issues of vast importance; if to have borne himself well for 35 years as he has done amidst the stir and stress and strain of fiery competition; if to have preserved, as he has done, unbroken and unimpaired, all the best and noblest traditions of a great and honourable profession, were disqualifications for this post,—why, I say that those are qualifications for an Office which pre-eminently demands from its occupant good judgment, a judicial temper, and inflexibility of purpose. [*Cheers.*] Nevertheless, I am exceedingly glad on an occasion like this to feel myself free to speak the language of friendship and conviction without in the very least degree depreciating the merits of anybody also. For, after all, what are the qualities of which we are in search? High character, impartiality, good sense, and good temper; and it would indeed be little short of a public scandal if there were not at least two Members of this House — [*Laughter*] —who, by the common consent of all, possessed those great qualifications. Sir Reginald Palgrave,—in seconding the Motion, as I now formally do, I have only to add my conviction that if the choice should fall upon my hon. Friend, and he to-day should be called to that Chair, time, the sole test of men's characters and of men's actions, will very soon reveal the fact that we have for our new Speaker a man qualified both by nature and by education, by mind and by will, to be the spokesman of our rights, the guardian of our liberties, and the preserver from day to day in our midst of what should be dearer to us than all our rights, more precious by far than any of our privileges—our order, our honour, and our dignity. [*Cheers.*]

*SIR JOHN MOWBRAY (Oxford University), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: Sir Reginald Palgrave,—For 40 years past, during ten continuous Parliaments, and on no less than twelve occasions when we have been called upon to choose our Speaker, it has been my happy lot to find myself on every occasion in combination with my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford —united with him in supporting one candidate, called to the Chair by the unanimous assent of the House. I regret that that is not the case on the present occasion. In 1884 I listened with great pleasure to the weighty speech of my hon. Friend when he proposed Mr. Peel for the first time for election. In 1886 it was my pride to be invited to propose Mr. Peel for re-election, and I endeavoured, as far as I could, to follow in the footsteps of my hon. Friend. But I regret still more the divergence of opinion from my hon. Friend when I remember that it is more than 30 years since first we co-operated in this House, working together on many Committees, and acting without the shadow of a shade of difference. [" Hear, hear!"] I therefore feel very sorry indeed that circumstances compel us to part for a few moments—and it will be for a few moments only—and I am sure that it will be with great pleasure that we shall rejoin each other, and be as good friends as ever. [*Cheers.*] But while I agree with my hon. Friend in the importance which he attaches to a unanimous choice of the Speaker of this House, I totally demur to the proposition which he has stated, that the selection of the Speaker rests with the majority. The selection for the august position of the Speaker of this House rests with the House at large—[*Cheers*]—even if there were that commanding majority which the hon. Member thinks has a right to impose a Speaker on this House. But I say that no such commanding majority exists at the present moment; and until the tellers have announced the numbers at the Table of the House, no Member has a right to claim a majority on the one side or on the other. [*Cheers.*] I give my hon. Friend the credit—for I know that he deserves it—of being animated with the highest sense of public duty on this and every occasion; but I claim the right of saying that I come here with a sense of duty quite as high. [*Cheers.*] We have a paramount duty to this House to discharge, and I shall not fail to show to some hon. Gentlemen, and, perhaps, to some right hon. Gentlemen, too, on the other side of the House, that all Parliamentary traditions and usages would lead us to prefer my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool, whom I shall venture to nominate for the honourable post of Speaker of this House. We have to choose to-day a Speaker of this great Assembly. Not one word shall escape my lips which can offend the susceptibilities or wound the feelings of the hon. and learned Member for Carlisle. We know him to be a courteous gentleman. I have heard him highly spoken of by all his friends, and the speech of the hon. Member for Fife bears testimony to the warm affection which the hon. and learned Member has inspired among his numerous friends. He has won his way in a long career to a distinguished position in a noble profession, which has sometimes, indeed, qualified for the Chair of this House, but which more ordinarily leads to the Woolsack. [*Laughter and Cheers.*] What I claim to-day for this House is, that we should choose for our Speaker a Member who is essentially one of ourselves; who has been trained within these walls, and not within the Courts of Law—[*Cheers*]—who knows our Standing Orders; who is imbued with our traditions, and who is known and recommended to us by personal antecedents. This is not the occasion on which to trouble the House with quotations, but there are two lines so apposite, and coming from so great an authority, that I hope the House will allow me to quote them. Mr. Bright, in 1886, in seconding the Motion for the re-election of Mr. Peel, said:—

> "It is absolutely necessary that the Speaker should have a complete and minute knowledge of the proceedings of this House and of its mode of transacting business."

[*Cheers.*] All the qualifications which I have enumerated are possessed by my right hon. Friend, Sir Matthew White Ridley. [*Cheers.*] Our late Speaker, on Monday last, in that remarkable address which none of us can ever forget, spoke not merely of the eleven years which he had passed in that Chair, but of the 30 years which he had passed in the House. My right hon. Friend has already passed more than half his life—27 years within this House. He came here in 1868, a young man with the highest and most brilliant reputation from Oxford. I do not recommend him merely for all his brilliant attainments, for his high character, for his learning, for his scholarship, for his culture. Nor would I venture, especially after the lecture we have had from the hon. Member for Bedford, to say that my right hon. Friend possesses an acre of land anywhere. [*Laughter and Cheers.*] What I would say of him is, that he fulfils all the requirements of my hon. Friend and something more. He is a capable man of business; he has, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford desires, a well-balanced mind. Indeed, he has a singularly open and impartial mind; and I doubt whether any Member of this House possesses a mind equally free from prejudice. He has great independence of thought; he has consummate judgment; he has infinite tact and temper. His opinions, moreover, have not been inherited like his acres, nor have they been accepted from any one else. They are the result of his own independent and deliberate convictions. In his own native county of Northumberland, where he is beloved—[*Cheers*]—in Oxford, or in this House, ask anywhere you like of any one who knows him—every one testifies that his views, whatever they may be, are characterised by the vigour of his intellect, by the absence of prejudice, and by sobriety and moderation. [*Cheers.*] We have known him in six Parliaments as an active and useful Member of this House, never speaking without authority, and always commanding the attention of the House. He has served on Committee after Committee. [*Cheers.*] For years past he has been Chairman of our Grand Committees—["Hear, hear!"]—a heavy task, the more so because the duties are somewhat undefined, and the influence of the Committees rests rather on the personal qualifications of the Chairman than upon the powers delegated to him by this House. ["Hear, hear!"] Last year especially he undertook—very reluctantly, I know—the duties of the Chairmanship of the Scotch Committee—duties which I know on the evidence I have received from every Member of the Committee to whom I have spoken, he discharged in the most admirable way. ["Hear, hear!"] I do not wish to revive any unpleasant controversy, but I may be allowed to say this much—that the establishment of that Committee, formed as it was in contravention of all rules on which other Grand Committees are constructed, was a perilous experiment. If ever a Committee required tact, judgment, firm and delicate handling, it was that Committee; and, greatly to the credit of my right hon. Friend, it was owing to the admirable way in which he conducted the proceedings that the Committee was attended with the success it had. These have been his duties within the House. Outside the House he has discharged duties connected with Parliamentary life no less important, no less onerous, no less honourable. For four years, from 1877 to 1881, he was one of the Commissioners named in the Act of 1877 for making Statutes for the University of Oxford. I recollect that when the names of the Commissioners were read out to the House, and the name of Mr. Matthew White Ridley, as he then was, was reached, though the last on the list, Mr. Robert Lowe, then a Member of this House, than whom there was no greater or more zealous University reformer, rose and expressed how entirely his confidence in that Commission was strengthened by the nomination of my right hon. Friend. ["Hear, hear!"] For four other years, from 1886 to 1890, my right hon. Friend was Chairman of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the establishment of the different offices of State at home and abroad. The Commission was named after him—the Ridley Commission. It sat for four years, it presented voluminous Reports, and it did what few Commissions do, led to important results. At any rate, my right hon. Friend deserves credit for the public spirit and for the admirable way in which he discharged his duties on that Commission. But that is not all. This House has known my right hon. Friend as a Member of the Government in two most important Departments. He has been Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, and has filled the very important office of Financial Secretary to the Treasury. Those who were in the House eleven years ago will recollect that posts almost identical had been held by Mr. Arthur Peel, and that his holding of them was urged as one of the considerations why he should be appointed Speaker. In short, I say my right hon. Friend comes to us with all those credentials which for the last half century have recommended to us the great Speakers who have sat in the Chair during that time—Mr. Peel, Sir Henry Brand, Mr. Denison, and Mr. Shaw Lefevre. If I do not go back, as my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford has done, and call up the ghosts of past Speakers and the memories of Mr. Wynn, Colonel Wilson Patten, and even of Mr. Pitt—if I do not go through the whole century, I hope he will consider that half-a-century is enough for the present occasion. [*A laugh.*] I venture to say that my right hon. Friend has been recognised in the House, and accepted by the House, as a man designated some day to occupy the Speaker's Chair, and even now, in spite of all that has fallen from my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford, and from the Seconder of the Motion, I hope that my right hon. Friend may approve himself to the choice of this House, for I must say again this election does not rest upon the majority, but upon the whole House and the individual Members of the House. On Monday we listened to the admirable address which Mr. Peel gave us from that Chair. To-day that Chair is empty, but the echoes of that address still linger in our ears, and the memory of that august and dignified presence has not faded away. [*Cheers.*] The Chair is silent, the Chair is empty, but—

> ". . . as of yore,
> The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
> Did but of Rome's best son remind her more."

Voiceless though that Chair may be, it appeals to us by the memory of many centuries, by the recollection of the great and illustrious man we have just lost, to put aside all private feelings, all personal friendships, all party considerations—[*Cheers and Counter Cheers*]—to rise to the dignity of the occasion, and take great care that we select from our ranks a fit man to be a worthy successor to Arthur Wellesley Peel. I am confident that my right hon. Friend Sir Matthew White Ridley is such a man. There is no one to my mind who can combine so many qualifications as he does. I am convinced that a great many of you on the other side of the House believe what I say—[*Laughter and Cheers*]—and I ask you to express your opinions by your votes. I thank the House for the kind way in which you have listened to me, and I beg to propose that my right hon. Friend, Sir Matthew White Ridley, do take the Chair of this House as Speaker. [*Opposition Cheers.*]

MR. J. LLOYD WHARTON (York W.R., Ripon): Sir Reginald Palgrave,—It is with intense satisfaction that I rise to second the proposition which has been so ably and clearly made by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Oxford University. Before I say a word of that I am here to say to-day, I wish to say one word, by way of protest, against what has fallen from the lips of my hon. Friend the Member for Bedford. Did that hon. Gentleman suppose that there was going to fall from my right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford or from me—a friend of 32 years' standing—carping observations, disparaging remarks, with regard to my old friend, the hon. and learned Member for Carlisle? If he did he was mistaken in his men. [*Cheers.*] I had hoped that to-day this discussion would be conducted without one word of acrimony. ["Hear, hear!"] Having said that I will myself not introduce one single word which will rouse any feelings in this House which can tend in that direction. I am not going, after the able and lucid statement of my right hon. Friend with regard to the qualifications of Sir Matthew White Ridley, to reduplicate or to reiterate anything he has said as to those qualifications. They are well-known, I believe, to every Member of the House, and I defy any hon. Gentleman to say this, at any rate—that in Sir Matthew White Ridley we have not got a man who is eminently qualified to take and to fill the great and dignified Office of Speaker. I think I can sum up the qualifications of my right hon. Friend in one line, one of the noblest lines that was ever written. I say of Sir Matthew White Ridley that, whether you look at his private or public life, he is a man who has worn "the white flower of a blameless life." ["Hear, hear!"] I perhaps may consider myself in some little way entitled to speak of my right hon. Friend, because now for many years I have acted humbly in a public capacity in the neighbouring county to that in which my right hon. Friend has done such good work. I only came from that county yesterday, and I can assure this House that every man I met there, without reference to Party, seemed to me only too anxious that the honour should be done to the North of England—[*Cries of* "Carlisle!"]—and to his native county by electing Sir Matthew White Ridley to that Chair. I feel that this is no question either of private friendship or of anything but public duty. A great and solemn duty now lies on every Member of the House, a duty which I pray and hope may be discharged without reference to any Party consideration. ["Oh, oh!"] I hope that every Member of the House will give his Vote from a desire that the best man, best in the interest of this House, best in the interest of the history of this House, best in the interest of the country and of the Empire, may be selected to fill that Chair. Without one single word against my hon. Friend opposite, I believe, nay, I know, that in my right hon. Friend here we have such a man; and more than that, I believe that in him we have the very best man who could be selected—having reference alike to his early training, to his work in the House, and to the feelings with which he is regarded by every man who has known him. I commend the name of Sir Matthew White Ridley to the acceptance of this House, and I second the proposition of my right hon. Friend, the Member for the Oxford University. [*Opposition Cheers.*]

*MR. WILLIAM COURT GULLY (Carlisle), who was received with loud Ministerial cheers, said: Sir Reginald Palgrave,—It is, I believe, in accordance with Parliamentary usage and precedent that I should at this stage of our proceedings address a few observations to the House. It is rather an embarrassing privilege, not only because one is called upon to speak about one's self, but because, although the matter before the House raises a certain controversial position—a temporary one—between the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Blackpool Division and myself, it is impossible for me to enter into the matters which are involved in the controversy. I do not rise, I need scarcely say, to commend myself. Still less do I rise to utter one word of disparagement of the right hon. Baronet—a gentleman who, during his long and honourable Parliamentary career, has gained for himself the general esteem and respect of this House. [*Cheers.*] I do not doubt that the right hon. Gentleman who proposed him, and the hon. Gentleman who seconded him, have said not one word more than is just and true regarding his merits. I do not desire to gainsay one word that they have uttered—["Hear, hear!"]—and at the same time I must thank them for the kind expressions they have used towards me. I must also confess that while listening to the speeches of my two hon. Friends near me, I have felt very conscious that they have been speaking in far too flattering terms of any qualifications I may be thought to possess. This, at least, I hope I may say without egotism or offence, that, in my humble opinion, to be chosen Speaker of this ancient and famous Assembly is the greatest honour that can be conferred on any subject of Her Majesty by his fellow-subjects—[*Cheers*]—and the man upon whom such an honour falls has imposed upon him the sacred duty of upholding and maintaining untarnished the splendid reputation with which from its earliest history up to the present moment the Chair has been invested, as well as to preserve undiminished the dignity, the interests, and the privileges of this House. [*Cheers.*] Sir, this is not an occasion upon which a Member whose name has been proposed ought to trouble the House with many observations. The object of calling upon him to speak at all is, I understand, not that he should canvass the question before the House, but that he should inform the House whether or not he is willing to serve in the Office to which it is proposed to elect him. Sir, I submit myself in all humility to the wishes of the House. [*Ministerial Cheers.*] If the House should think fit to call upon me to preside over its Debates, I shall do all that in me lies to act in a manner becoming that great Office. If otherwise, I shall always entertain a proud and grateful recollection of the fact that a large number, at least, of my fellow Representatives, once thought me worthy of so high a distinction. [*Cheers.*]

Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY (Lancashire, N., Blackpool), who was received with loud Opposition cheers, said: Sir,—I am sure the House will allow me, in the first place, to express my strong personal acknowledgment of the favourable—the far too favourable—manner in which my two old friends, my right hon. Friend the Member for my old University of Oxford and my hon. Friend the Member for the Ripon Division, have presented my name to the House as a candidate for the vacant Chair. I feel most deeply the high honour which they and others have conferred upon me in thinking me in any degree worthy of such an Office. If at the present moment I do not say much —following the example of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Carlisle —it is because I feel that, in making my submission to the House, and in humbly placing my services, if they should be so pleased, at their disposal, it is not befitting or proper that anything much should be said by the candidates. ["Hear, hear!"] It would ill become me to enlarge upon the qualities which should attach to the occupant of that Chair, for I am deeply sensible I should only indicate to what an extent my own personality falls short of that ideal and and of that splendid example which has been so recently shown to us. Any man, either in this House or outside of it, may well shrink from such a comparison. Less do I think it would become me to say a word of any of the qualifications which the partiality and indulgence of my friends may have endeavoured to persuade myself and others that I possess. The decision to-day is to be arrived at by the free judgment of others upon the past conduct in life and the past conduct in this House of any Member who may be submitted to the consideration of this Assembly. ["Hear, hear!"] It is a very painful thing to me to be put into competition with my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Carlisle, both on private and public grounds. I know well that the authority of that Chair, which is of such supreme and vital importance to the order and liberties of debate, is based alike upon the severe impartiality of its occupant, and upon the absolute confidence which is accordingly reposed in him by every Member and every Party in this House.

[*Cheers.*] I trust, Sir, that what has been occurring during the last few weeks and the events of to-day may not, in any degree whatever, render the task on either side, in the future, more difficult; and I am confident that the whole House will re-echo that sentiment, and will devote itself to that great end. [*Cheers.*] Sir, if it should be the pleasure of the House to elect me to that Chair, I shall, to the best of my poor abilities, endeavour to attain to that splendid impartiality which we have recently witnessed, and to endeavour to win from every quarter of the House that confidence which is the main strength of its Speaker. [*Cheers.*] If, however, the efforts of my Friends to impose upon me this high and honourable task should not be successful, I shall (as will all of them I may with the utmost confidence say), with an equal zeal for the order and dignity of this House, co-operate with every Member in it to hand down unimpaired to those who come after us that magnificent inheritance of the authority and independence of the Chair. [*Cheers.*] I hope I have not said too much; and I humbly submit myself to the judgment of the House. [*Opposition Cheers.*]

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.), who, on rising, was greeted with Oppisition cheers, said: Sir Reginald Palgrave,—I should gladly have followed such precedents as would justify me in keeping silence on this occasion had it seemed consistent with my public duty to do so; and if the only question before the House had lain between two Gentlemen, both qualified by their Parliamentary antecedents for filling the great Office of Speaker for this Assembly, I should certainly not have ventured to intervene in this Debate. ["Hear, hear!"] Although, nominally, the matter is left to the House, we all know that this is a Government proceeding—["Hear, hear!"]—and the course which the Government have thought fit to adopt on this occasion is,

*Sir Matthew White Ridley.*

in my judgment, not only so absolutely without precedent, but is so absolutely dangerous to the future efficiency of our proceedings, that I should have thought myself guilty of a great wrong had I kept silence to-day. [*Opposition Cheers.*] I need not tell the House that the very last thing I desire to do is, to say one word which can directly, or indirectly, give pain—I will not say pain, but any uneasiness or any unpleasant feeling—to any Gentleman in this House, and, least of all, to the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just submitted himself to the pleasure of the House—I mean the hon. Member for Carlisle. ["Hear, hear!"] Sir, I have not the pleasure or the honour of that hon. and learned Gentleman's acquaintance. The loss is my own. All those who know him, and there are many in this House who know him, unite with the Seconder of the Motion that he take the Chair in dwelling upon the personal charm and high character of the hon. and learned Gentleman. ["Hear, hear!"] Sir, I can assure him that not only are we who do not know him ready to accept the testimony of those who do know him, but we believe that, should he be elected to the Chair, he will show himself not only a high-minded and honourable gentleman, but an absolutely impartial judge as between Member and Member and Party and Party. [*Cheers.*] But, Sir, other considerations must be brought to the determination of this great issue. The House must have noticed, I think, the great contrast between the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the hon. and learned Member for Carlisle, and the speeches of the Mover and Seconder of my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool. [*Opposition Cheers.*] I do not allude to that unfortunate and jarring note which the Mover of the hon. Member for Carlisle so unhappily, and so unhistorically, introduced into this Debate. [*Opposition Cheers.*] The hon. Member for Bedford apparently thought it not inconsistent with the duty he was performing to throw a taunt to this side of the House, and to suggest that in the course we are taking we are animated by a desire to support some particular interest in the country.

Mr. WHITBREAD: I trust the right hon. Gentleman will allow me a word. I was engaged in thinking what possible objection could be raised to the candidature of my hon. and learned Friend —[*Opposition Cries of* "Oh!" *and Ministerial Cheers*]—and in looking over the history of previous contests, now a long time ago, I came upon that objection to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. I can only say to the House that I did not for a moment put it seriously forward—[*Opposition Cries of* "Oh!"]—or with the slighest intention of inflicting pain upon anyone, and certainly not in the slightest sense to disparage the claim of my right hon. Friend opposite. [*Opposition Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and Ministerial Cheers.*] I can only regret that what I put forward, merely to discard as impossible and not at all likely to be urged, should have caused misunderstanding.

Mr. BALFOUR: Of course, if the hon. Gentleman meant it as a joke I have not another word to say. [*Opposition Laughter and Cheers, and Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] No, Sir, it is not I who desire to introduce superfluous controversy. I supposed it was the hon. Gentleman. Am I to take it seriously or am I not? If I am to take it seriously I would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite who object to what I have just said, that if you look through the list of Speakers for the last hundred years you will find that the Tory Speakers—those who have been elected from the Tory side of the House—have not as a rule, been landowners—[*Opposition Cheers*]—but if you want to find specimen representatives of the landed interest you will find them in the two great Whig Speakers, Mr. Denison and Mr. Lefevre. [*Opposition Laughter and Cheers.*] I pass from the speech of the proposer of the hon. Member for Carlisle to the far more agreeable task of considering what was said by the Seconder. [*Cheers.*] The Seconder of the Motion in a speech of admirable taste dwelt upon the great professional claims and the admirable private character of the Member for Carlisle. But there was one point upon which we should like to have heard something either from the Mover or the Seconder, or from both—namely, the special Parliamentary qualifications possessed by the hon. and learned Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] The Mover did, indeed, tell us that Mr. Speaker Shaw Lefevre had only been a Member of this House nine years at the time he was elected Speaker, and he said nine years was precisely the length of time and length of experience possessed by the hon. and learned Member for Carlisle. Yes, Sir, the length of time is the same in both cases; but how, in the two cases, were these nine years spent from a Parliamentary point of view? It is not too much to say that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Carlisle is absolutely unknown to us in his Parliamentary capacity. [*Cheers.*] Warm friends, devoted friends, deserved friends, he doubtless has on both sides of the House. But he is wholly unknown to us in any capacity connected with the work of this House. He has never, so far as I am aware, opened his lips in our Debates; he has never, so far as I know, served on a Private Bill Committee; he has never, so far as I know, served on a Select Committee; he has never, so far as I know, attended on a Grand Committee. [*Cheers.*] What is the case of Mr. Shaw Lefevre? Mr. Shaw Lefevre had busied himself during his nine years of membership, not only with Debates in this House, but in the great work of reorganising the system of our Private Bill Legislation, at that time proving itself utterly inadequate to meet the increasing needs of the great railway development. Mr. Shaw Lefevre in 1837—when his predecessor in the Chair was re-elected in the new Parliament—was selected by the general sense of his Party and of the House—such was his standing in the House—to be the proposer of the re-election of Mr. Speaker Abercrombie; and when two years afterwards Mr. Speaker Abercrombie resigned on account of ill-health, everybody felt that, at all events, whatever might be said against Mr. Shaw Lefevre, it was impossible to deny that he had, during those nine years, done great work in the House of Commons, and had identified himself so far as was possible with the House of Commons. You will search our records in vain for an instance of a Party or a Government selecting as their candidate for this high Office any man who has not made himself thoroughly acquainted with the Rules and the Procedure of the House, not by getting them up out of a book, but by constant study, by constant attendance, and by constant work in the House. We have chosen Speakers, as it were, from among our own children, from those whose ambitions have been Parliamentary ambitions, whose work has been Parliamentary work, and it is saying nothing against the hon. Gentleman, nothing to which I am sure either he nor the most devoted of his Friends will object, to remind the House, for it is a matter of public notoriety, not only that his labours have not lain within these walls, but that his legitimate and his honourable ambitions have been in other walks of life. That seems to me a sufficiently overwhelmning and conclusive reason for the votes that those of us mean to give who intend to support my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackpool. There is only one other point which it is perhaps absolutely necessary for me to advert to before sitting down. Lord Russell—Lord John Russell, as he then was—in 1835 laid down the broad proposition that the Speaker should represent the political feelings of the majority of the House. That, apparently, was the orthodox Whig doctrine of that day. To that doctrine I do not subscribe, and certainly the Party to which I belong—from whose ranks no Speaker, on his first election, has been drawn for two generations—cannot be accused of ever having attempted to use their Party majority, when they possessed it, to put in the Chair any Gentleman who shared their political views. [*Cheers.*] But, Sir, the Government have chosen, under circumstances which should have made them, I should have said, more than usually anxious to consult the general view of all Parties in the House—under circumstances which should have made them specially cautious in violating any Parliamentary tradition—the Government have deliberately chosen to insist—[*Loud Cries of* "Courtney" *from the Ministerial and Nationalist Benches*]—they have deliberately elected to break all Parliamentary traditions. [*Cheers and Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Courtney."] Name a precedent. I challenge anyone to contradict me, that the Government, in proposing to call an hon. and learned Gentleman who has taken so little part in our Parliamentary proceedings, and has so little identified himself with our Parliamentary life, have absolutely broken every tradition which has prevailed during the last century. [*Cheers.*] Under these circumstances, if we assemble in this House under changed conditions, we must remember that if the Tory Party or the Unionist Party—[*Ironical Ministerial Cheers*]—do not consider themselves compelled to follow the precedents which they, and not the Whig or Liberal Party, have set in this matter, the fault will be not with the hon. Gentleman who has been put by his friends in what I cannot but regard as a false position—[*Cheers and Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—the fault will be not with him, still less with us, but with the Government who, as I think, on an occasion so important for the future interests of this House, have deliberately elected to cast to the winds all precedent and all tradition for the purpose of pressing upon our attention one of their own friends. [*Cheers.*]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER : I deeply regret—[*Opposition Laughter*]—and I think the right hon. Gentleman will one day regret, that he has departed from the precedents established by the great masters of Parliamentary law—[Mr. BALFOUR : "Peel"]—who on the last occasion when there was a contest on the Speakership, in 1839—I refer to Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel—determined that neither of the Leaders on either of the Front Benches should take part in a discussion of this character—[*Cheers*]—but that they should leave the decision to the House. The right hon. Gentleman, however, has thought fit to, I will not say invent, but to produce what I think will be regarded as an evil example in generations to come, by giving to a discussion of this character, unnecessarily, by his intervention, a Party character which it need not have had. ["Oh, oh!" *and Cheers.*] All I can say is, that, in all the speeches which preceded his, the speakers, regardful of the character of this House, have carefully avoided introducing Party considerations. [*Cries of* "Whitbread."] No, no. I heard nothing of a Party character in my hon. Friend's speech. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman, in his extreme anxiety to find an opportunity for a Party attack upon the Government, has made two objections to the election of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Carlisle. He says that my hon. and learned Friend is comparatively unknown—[*Opposition Cheers*]—and that he has taken but little part in the business of this House. [*Opposition Cheers.*] Now that is not a new objection taken by gentlemen on the other side of the House. Within the last twenty-four hours I have read, from a gentleman who sits upon the Front Bench opposite—the hon. Member for Wigtonshire—an account of the feelings and the action of the Conservative Party at the time of the election of Mr. Peel. He describes in very graphic terms what took place on that occasion, and I will ask leave to read to the House the words of that hon. Gentleman. He said—I read this because it was headed with his name—

> "When Mr. Brand resigned his Office, we thought then that we were losing a Speaker who, whatever high qualities might be developed in his successor, was matchless in a singular dignity of carriage and expression When Mr. Peel was mentioned as that successor, he was unknown even by sight to a very large minority of the House of Commons."

[*Loud Cheers.*]

MR. BALFOUR : He had been an Under Secretary. [*Cheers.*]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER : These are not my words ; these are the words of your colleague, printed last night. [*Cheers.*]

> "Few Members had ever heard him speak, and deep were the murmurs when it became known that the Government intended to support his candidature. Howbeit, the Conservatives being in a hopeless minority in that Parliament, it was wisely decided—"

yes, there were wise men to decide in those days—[*Cheers*]—

> "that the best course was to accept the Government nominee ;"

and, mark this—

> "on the understanding that, should the fortunes of the polls put them in a position to do so, they would bring forward their own candidate at a fitting time. One thing was quite settled, that nothing should induce the Conservative Party to keep this unknown man in the Chair a moment after they should be in a position to turn him out."

And this is the concluding sentence :—

> "'We will not have this man to reign over us,' was the general sentiment of the Tory rank and file."

The right hon. Gentleman has not even the privilege of being the new inspirer of this policy, of this spirit, of this language. It was exactly the same spirit, the same language, the same policy, which inspired that Party at the election of Mr. Peel ; and I should have thought that the experience of those sentiments might have induced the right hon. Gentleman to have abstained from reproducing them to-day.

[MR. BALFOUR made a remark across the Table which was inaudible in the Gallery.]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I remember the circumstances very well, and I can bear witness to the truth of this extract. So much for the first point of the right hon. Gentleman. In the year 1839, when Lord John Russell and Sir R. Peel, both being responsible for the character of this House, entered upon a contest of this kind—there are few men in the House who can remember that time, though my recollection as a boy goes back to those days—Party spirit was never higher than it was at that moment. It was just after the Bedchamber Plot, and, therefore, never was Party spirit higher than it was when Mr. Shaw Lefevre was proposed on one side and Mr. Goulburn on the other, and yet the two Leaders on either side of the House wisely, I think, and prudently abstained from raising the Party question. The question which was raised then was no doubt the choice of one of two candidates—we may have a difference of opinion as to which is most fit, but nobody will deny that both are fit. [*Cheers.*] My hon. Friend the Seconder wittily said that there are at least two men in this House who are fit to be Speakers, and I thought when my hon. Friend the Member for Ripon was addressing us that he proved there were more than two. But the argument in 1839 was not one of bitter and acrimonious Party spirit, such as the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to incite. ["Oh!" *and interruption.*] Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel were incapable of taking such a course. In 1835 no doubt it was a different case, because that was a question of displacing a Speaker already in the Chair on the ground of alleged political partiality. [Mr. T. G. BOWLES: "No."] But yes. Of course, the personal memory of the hon. Member for King's Lynn goes further back than mine. [*Laughter.*] The second charge brought against us in the same spirit by the right hon. Gentleman is that the Government have endeavoured tyrannically to impose upon this House a Speaker by the force of the majority. The right hon. Gentleman must know, and does know, that the charge is absolutely unfounded. [*Cheers.*] He knows perfectly well that the first object of Her Majesty's Government and of myself, who hold myself responsible to the House of Commons not merely as a Member of the Government, but in what I regard as a far more responsible position, that of Leader of the House of Commons—that my first object was to secure, if it were possible, a unanimous election. [*Cheers.*] It was my first, as it was my last, object to do so, and who has defeated it? [*Cheers and Counter Cheers.*] Sir, it is perfectly well known who it was. You talk of men of Parliamentary experience. The right hon. Gentleman knows that my object and the object of the Government was to secure in the Chair that man who of all others——[*Loud Cheers, which drowned the conclusion of the sentence*]—who alone—— [*Renewed Cheers and Counter Cheers.*] Who was it prevented it? The friends of that Gentleman who politically act with him. [*Cries of* "Labouchere," *and interruption.*] Allow me to proceed. They officially declared that they were willing and anxious to support his election, but as their Tory allies—those were the words—were determined upon a particular candidate they must withdraw their support. [*Cheers.*] If it had not been for that compact, which is worked in such a singular way, both inside this House and out of it—["Hear, hear!"]—not very advantageously, as it seems to me, to either Party—if it had not, I say, been for that compact, there would have been, if not a unanimous election to the Chair, at least an overwhelming majority of far above 100 in favour of the Gentleman to whom I have referred. It was the veto of the right hon. Gentleman who in the name of a minority—and in that case it would have been a small minority—undertakes to dictate to this House and to its majority who shall be designated to be in the Chair. Therefore, if unfortunately to-day we are, after the lapse of so many years, to have a contest for the Speakership, it is the fault of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. [*Angry Cries of* "No."] I protest I have laboured from first to last to prevent this controversy. [*Interruption.*] There is no man in this House who does not know I am stating what is the fact. [*Renewed Interruption and Cries of* "BANNERMAN."] I hear the name of another gentleman mentioned, my right hon. Friend who sits beside me. In answer to that, I have to say, in the first place, that it would have been contrary to all Parliamentary precedent that any Member of the Cabinet from this Bench should have gone to that Chair. That, in itself, was to my mind an objection of the strongest character to such a proceeding. But I want to know—By what right does the minority of the House undertake to dictate who should be the person to fill the Speaker's Chair? [*Cheers.*] They say—"You shall either take the man on your side we name or you shall take the man on our side we name." [*Cheers.*] For that there is no precedent; there is for the position which the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to create, no justification. I am extremely sorry. The right hon. Gentleman knows that I have done my best to prevent the intervention either of himself or of myself in this Debate. I have deprecated it from the first. First of all I desired there should be no contest at all, and the next thing I desired was that if there was to be a contest there should be as little of Party spirit imported into it as could be. The right hon. Gentleman, first of all, has refused that the matter should be determined without a contest, and afterwards he endeavoured by his intervention in this Debate to give it a Party aspect. [An HON. MEMBER: "Whitbread."] I am sorry it should be so; but under the circumstances of this case, he having chosen to give it a Party aspect, I shall give my warm and cordial support to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Carlisle. [*Cheers.*]

**MR. BALFOUR**, who was prevented for a space of about two minutes from uttering a word by loud and sustained cries of "Spoke, spoke!" proceeding from the Irish Nationalist Benches: The House will readily believe——[*Cries of* "Spoke" *from* Mr. T. M. HEALY, *and a voice:* "Order, Healy!"]——

***THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** again rose and lifted his arm in mute appeal for order. Comparative silence having been restored, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, addressing the Irish Members, said: I understand the right hon. Gentleman wishes to speak in explanation.

**MR. BALFOUR**: I can assure hon. Members that I have sufficient acquaintance with the rules of Debate not to endeavour, under the guise of a personal explanation, to go beyond the limits of a personal explanation. ["Hear, hear!"] I was only going to say that, as the right hon. Gentleman has introduced certain considerations, drawn from a period antecedent to the candidature of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carlisle, I must not be understood as admitting the accuracy of the history he has given of my share in those proceedings. [*Cheers.*]

The House then divided on the Motion that Mr. Gully should take the Chair as Speaker, the Tellers for the Ayes being Mr. T. Ellis and Mr. W. A. McArthur; and for the Noes, Sir J. Mowbray and Mr. Wharton. When all the Members had returned to the House from the Division Lobbies, and it was seen that the Clerk at the Table handed to Mr. Thomas Ellis, the Government Whip, the slip of paper containing the numbers, the election of Mr. Gully being thereby notified, the occupants of the Ministerial Benches cheered loudly.

The numbers were:—Ayes, 285; Noes, 274.—[Division List, No. 43.]

The result of the Division was received with loud and prolonged cheers and counter cheers.

On returning into the House, Mr. Gully had taken a corner seat on the fourth Bench above the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House. After the announcement of the numbers Mr. Whitbread rose from his place, and, having approached Mr. Gully, took him by the hand and conducted him as Speaker-Elect to the Chair amid cheers.

*Then **MR. SPEAKER-ELECT**, standing on the upper step of the Chair, addressed the House. He said: I beg to tender to the House my most humble and earnest thanks for the signal and unlooked-for honour that has been conferred upon me by electing me to be Speaker of this House. But whilst I feel the greatness of the honour, I feel still more deeply the weight of the responsibility undertaken. When I remember the great names and reputations of the distinguished men who in the past have sat in the position where I am standing now, and still more when I remember that great Speaker whom we saw yesterday in this Chair—when I remember his dignity and courtesy, his impartiality and firmness, his consummate knowledge of the law and usages of Parliament, and the vigour, rapidity, and tact with which he applied that knowledge to the business before the House — I confess I cannot but look forward with anxiety to the comparison, the inevitable comparison, which must daily be made between my inexperience and shortcomings and all the great qualities and traditions which we have been accustomed to associate with the Speaker's Chair. But I do venture to rely to some extent upon the generous indulgence of the House—[*Cheers*]—towards one of its least distinguished Members, who is suddenly called upon to follow so great a predecessor in so great a place; and I know that I can always largely rely upon that support which the House will give to the authority of the Chair, not out of any regard for its occupant, but out of consideration for the dignity of the House itself, and the good order of its Debates. [*Cheers.*] I do venture also to put some reliance upon the consciousness I feel myself of an earnest desire to do my duty to the House diligently, faithfully, and efficiently, without fear or favour, and without respect of persons. [*Loud Cheers.*] These considerations give me the courage once more to submit myself humbly to the wishes of the House, and to take my seat in the Chair to which the House has elected me. [*Loud and prolonged Cheers.*]

The Serjeant-at-Arms advanced up the floor of the House and replaced the Mace upon the Table, and—

*Mr. SPEAKER-ELECT took his seat in the Chair.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Mr. Gully,—I rise to congratulate you, Sir, as I should have congratulated my right hon. Friend opposite, the Member for the Blackpool Division, if the House had pronounced in his favour—I rise to congratulate you upon your taking your seat in that historical Chair. [*Cheers.*] I feel certain that you will do honour to the Chair, and I also feel certain that, in spite of the Discussion and the Division which we have had, you will receive—as my right hon. Friend the Member for the Blackpool Division would have received—from both sides of the House the support which you will greatly need in discharging the duties which you have to perform. [*Cheers.*]

Mr. BALFOUR: Mr. Gully,—I desire to associate myself with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cheers.*] You have been elected by a majority; you are now, Sir, the Representative of the whole House; and if I may venture to speak on behalf of the minority—on behalf of those who voted in the minority Lobby—I desire to tender you on their behalf the expression of our perfect confidence in your impartiality, and to say that you will receive from us every assistance which it is in our power to give you, with the object of relieving the labours and lightening the responsibilities of the heavy task you have undertaken. [*Loud Cheers.*]

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I rise to give notice that, by the Queen's Command, the Speaker whom the House has elected will be presented for Her Majesty's approval in the House of Lords on Monday, April 22nd, so that the Speaker will be able to take the Chair on that day at Three o'clock. I beg to move, Sir, "That this House do now adjourn."

*Mr. SPEAKER-ELECT put the Motion, which was agreed to.

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The Ministers present and other Members, as they passed the Chair, shook hands with Mr. Speaker-Elect, and congratulated him on his appointment.

The House adjourned at Ten minutes
to Two o'clock, until
Monday, April 22nd.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, 22nd April 1895.*

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## SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Oxford—after the death of his Uncle.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

## SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

William Court Gully, Esquire, Q.C., Speaker-elect, presented to the Lords Commissioners (by command of Her Majesty) under a Commission issued on that behalf.

The Commissioners were the Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell), the Earl of Kimberley, Earl Spencer, Lord Carrington, and Lord Kensington.

*MR. SPEAKER-ELECT, addressing the Commissioners, said: I have to inform your Lordships that Her Majesty's faithful Commons, in obedience to Her Royal command, in the exercise of their undoubted rights and privileges, have proceeded to the election of a Speaker, and their choice has fallen on me. I therefore present myself at your Lordships' bar and submit myself to Her Majesty's gracious approbation.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: It not being convenient for Her Majesty to be present at this time, a Commission has been issued under the Great Seal, commanding us and several other Lords to notify and to declare Her Majesty's approbation of the choice of her faithful Commons of William Court Gully to be Speaker, and which Commission you shall now hear read.

The Reading Clerk (the Hon. Slingsby Bethell) read the Commission at the table.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Mr. Gully—We have it in command from Her Majesty to declare Her Majesty's entire confidence in your talents, diligence, and efficiency to fulfil the important duties of the high office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to which you have been chosen by that House; and in obedience to the Commission which has been read, and by virtue of the authority therein contained, we do declare Her Majesty's Royal allowance and confirmation of you, Sir, as Speaker of the House of Commons.

MR. SPEAKER: My Lords—I submit myself in all humility to Her Majesty's Royal will and pleasure, and if in the discharge of my duties and in maintaining the rights and privileges of the Commons House of Parliament I shall be led into any inadvertent error, I pray that the blame may be imputed to me alone and not to Her Majesty's faithful Commons.

MR. SPEAKER retired, followed by the large body of Members who stood near the Bar.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR rose shortly afterwards, and, taking his seat for a moment on the Woolsack,

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (the Earl of Kimberley) moved the adjournment of the House until Tuesday, the 30th.

## COMMERCIAL REPORTS, No. 2 (1895).

Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives in Germany, Belgium, and the United States on legislative measures for suppressing gambling in fictitious wheat contracts, presented.

## CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS, 1886-87.

Eighth Annual Report of the Crofters Commission, being for the year to 31st December 1894, presented.

## EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Report by J. Struthers, Esquire, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in Scotland, on Sloyd and Kindergarten occupations in the elementary school, presented.

The House adjourned at a quarter past Three o'clock, to Tuesday the 30th instant, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Monday, 22nd April 1895.*

MR. SPEAKER-ELECT (Mr. William Court Gully, Q.C.), took the Chair at Three o'Clock, when Prayers were read by the Chaplin (the Rev. Dr. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury).

## THE SPEAKER.

A Message was delivered by the Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod (Captain T. D. Butler).

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker-Elect, with the House, went up to the House of Peers, where Mr. Speaker-Elect was presented to the Lords Commissioners for the approbation of Her Majesty.

Then the Lord High Chancellor, one of the said Commissioners, signified Her Majesty's approbation of Mr. Speaker-Elect, in the name, and on behalf of, Her Majesty.

The House being returned,—

*MR. SPEAKER said : I have to report to the House that this House has been in the House of Peers, where Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to signify by Her Lords Commissioners Her approbation of the choice of myself as Speaker of this House. I take this opportunity of repeating to the House my respectful acknowledgments of the honour it has done me, and the confidence it has reposed in me, and of renewing the assurance of my entire devotion to the service of the House.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) : I have to acquaint the House that the Address of Tuesday the 9th inst., to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty

"That she will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of her Royal favour upon the Right Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has, with such distinguished ability and dignity, presided in the Chair of this House, and to assure Her Majesty that whatever expense Her Majesty may think proper to incur on that account this House will make good the same,"

has been presented to Her Majesty, and Her Majesty has been pleased to receive the same very graciously, and has commanded me to acquaint this House that Her Majesty is desirous, in compliance with the wishes of her faithful Commons, to confer upon the said Right Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel some signal mark of her Royal favour, but, as the same cannot be effectually granted and secured without the concurrence of Parliament, Her Majesty recommends to the House of Commons the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose. Accordingly, Sir, I beg to give notice that I will to-morrow move a Committee of this House, and in order that it may be the first Order of the Day I make the proper motion that it shall have precedence of all other Orders.

*MR. SPEAKER put the question, "That this House will to-morrow resolve itself into a Committee to consider Her Majesty's gracious message," and the Motion was agreed to amid cheers.

## NEW WRIT.

For the Borough of Leeds (East Division) *v.* Lawrence Gane, esquire, Q.C., deceased.—*(Mr. Thomas Ellis.)*

## THE ARMENIAN ATROCITIES.

MR. C. H. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) presented a petition of behalf of the body of English Presbyterian ministers in and near London and Westminster showing—

"that, in view of the serious outrages which have been perpetrated in Armenia, and the continued disregard by the Turkish Government of the provisions of the 61st Article of the Berlin Treaty and of other treaty obligations, it is the bounden duty of this country, having regard to the responsibility which it has incurred, to use every effort to secure the introduction of definite and permanent reforms in Armenia, with the object of giving security to the lives and property of the inhabitants of those provinces."

The petition was signed on behalf of the petitioners by Dr. Brooke Herford (chairman), James Harwood, B.A., and Frank K. Freeston (hon. sec.).

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### DISTRESS AND PILOT SIGNALS.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received a letter from the coxswain of the Walmer lifeboat and the coxswain of the Deal lifeboat, dated 20th March last, stating that in their experience it is very difficult to distinguish at times what is required when they see signals fired at sea, and assuring him that they have on several occasions launched their boats, at the risk of their lives, in answer to signals supposed to be distress signals, only to find that the vessels firing these signals did not require assistance; whether he is aware that, after the collision between the *Rosa Mary* and the *W. A. Scholten* off Dover, the latter showed signals of distress, which were seen by the captain of the royal mail packet *Wave* (Captain Bennett), and mistaken by him for pilot signals, with the result that, whereas the *Wave* could easily have rescued all hands, the *W. A. Scholten* subsequently foundered with a loss of 128 lives; and whether he can hold out any hope of inquiry or action by the Board of Trade on the subject?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. THOMAS BURT, Morpeth): Yes, Sir, my right hon. Friend has received the letter referred to by the hon. Member, and a reply has been sent to the effect that distinctive signals of distress are already provided by the international regulations, and that, if they are improperly used, claims as for salvage may be made under the Merchant Shipping Act against the masters and owners of the ships so using them. The collision between the *Rosa Mary* and the *W. A. Scholten* occurred eight years ago, but I am informed that the Board of Trade have no information confirming the statement that the *Wave* could have saved those lost from the Dutch ship if her distress signals had not been mistaken for pilot signals. As my right hon. Colleague has already stated to the House in reply to questions on the 15th of March and the 1st instant, he is advised that the existing distress signals are quite distinctive, and that if they are properly used no confusion should arise. These signals are international, and have worked well for many years, and the Board of Trade see no occasion for further action or inquiry with regard to them.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked whether Roman candles were commonly recognised as danger signals, though not in the Code?

MR. BURT: I have no information.

### THE FINANCE ACT AND THE COLONIES.

MR. J. W. MACLURE (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Finance Act of 1894, Section 20, applies to the British Possessions in Victoria; and, if not, when the Order in Council will be granted to Victoria as regards duty on property in that possession.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The attention of the Colonies has been expressly called to this provision of the Finance Act, but the Government of Victoria has not yet requested that this Section may be applied by Order in Council to that Colony.

MR. MACLURE: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, under the Finance Act, 1894, Section 20, which provides that where in a British Possession to which this Section applies, duty is payable in respect of any property situate in such Possession, the Commissioners of Inland Revenue ought to allow a sum equal to the amount of that duty to be deducted from the Estate Duty payable under the Finance Act?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: In the case put, the Commissioners do allow, under Section 20 of the Finance Act, 1894, a sum equal to the amount of the Duty paid, or payable, in the British Possession to which the Section applies, to be deducted from the Estate Duty payable here in respect of the property situate in the British Possession. If more Duty on that property is payable in the British Possession than is payable here, we get nothing; if less we get the difference.

## CHITRAL.

SIR D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether the news of the relief of Chitral had been confirmed?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I have not been in communication with the India Office at all.

## NAMAQUALAND.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether three British subjects are imprisoned in Namaqualand by the German authorities under a German military law, and whether he can state the circumstances connected with their imprisonment, and the view taken of it by Her Majesty's Government? And whether any attempt has been made to secure the release of the two Messrs. Duncan and of Mr. McKemmie?

*SIR E. GREY: Two British subjects, Messrs. Duncan and McKemmie, were arrested in June 1894, and a third, Mr. Duncan, jun., in November 1894, by the German authorities in South-west Africa, on a charge of having smuggled arms and ammunition across the German frontier for the use of Headrik Witbooi. Mr. Duncan, junr., has since been released. The papers in Duncan senior's and McKemmie's case are stated to have been sent to the Supreme Court at Windkock by the local judge at the end of last year for final decision. The case has been represented to the German Government with reference to the length of time during which these men appear to have been kept in confinement without being brought to trial, and we have asked for information as to the result of the trial.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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## FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS BILL.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) formally moved the Second Reading of the Factories and Workshops Bill.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, there was not much room for controversy upon any one of the general or essential principles of the Bill, but there were many points upon which more information was needed than was given in the statement of the Home Secretary on the First Reading. There were other points upon which there was ground for supposing that the classes interested had not been very fully consulted, and there were also points which involved a good deal of obscurity, and which did not indicate very careful draughtsmanship. With regard to the disputable provisions, as to which the classes interested did not appear to have been consulted, the first of these was to be found in Clause 5, which refers to work in places outside the factory. In that case the occupier of the factory was to be made responsible for the sanitary condition of places which were not only exterior to his own factories, but which might even be situated outside the sanitary district in which his factory was situated, and in the composition or policy of which he could be said to have no influence. And this provision was by the second sub-section made to apply to any place, even though not a factory or a workshop from which the work was given out. That meant that the occupier of a factory or workshop was to be responsible for the sanitary condition of what might be really an office. That sub-section, he thought, required a certain amount of explanation. Then there was Clause 19, which related to the laundries. He had no doubt that a great deal of debate on the Second Reading of the Bill would be directed to that clause. The Home Secretary knew that there was no point which divided more acutely, or created more passionate differences of opinion amongst the friends of the employment of women, than this proposal to include laundries within the general factory law. No doubt in the agitation which has led to the adoption of this proposal by the Government there had been a great deal visible of the agency of the general spirit of trades unionism which was directed, not exclusively, and he did not believe anybody could pretend in a preponderating degree by or in the interests of the women themselves. The agitation had also been made stronger than it would otherwise have been by the indirect, if not the direct, representation, contrary to the fact that laundries were not at present under the sanitary provisions of the general law, At the passing of the Act of 1891 the ordinary sanitary provisions to which workshops were liable—including those relating to all necessary painting and whitewashing—although they were made enforceable by the local as distinct from the Imperial authority, were made so locally enforceable not less in the case of factories and workshops which were not laundries as those which were, and for the first time the laundries were expressly made liable to the observance of these provisions. If that fact had been made known much of the force and weight of this agitation would have been taken away. Even if that were not so there were other considerations, besides the mere difference of opinion to which he had alluded, which should make the House particularly careful how it proceeded in the matter of proposals of this kind. There was, for instance, the fact that they had not yet been able to arrive at anything like an electoral consultation of the classes concerned. The time to say whether this legislation was justified or was founded upon the great bulk of the public opinion of those whom it principally affected would arrive when, and not until, that House had extended the Parliamentary suffrage to women. The Home Secretary, no doubt, hoped he had disarmed one important element of opposition because he had inserted words which rendered it necessary to bring the operation of the law into effect, that laundries should be carried on for the purpose of gain. By such a provision the right hon. Gentleman probably thought to disarm the opposition of those who objected to this kind of legislation in the interests of conventual institutions. He very much doubted whether those words would have the effect of excluding those laundries, and it was desirable that the right hon. Gentleman should inform them if such was his intention in inserting the words, and if not, whether he was prepared to adopt any modification of the clause which would remove the objections which were so strongly entertained in 1891, and which, he might say, actually turned the scale in 1891, for the purpose of excluding conventual institutions from these proposals. Clause 21, which related to tenement factories, was one which particularly affected his constituency. The main principle was, no doubt, good—which was that where a large building was let out in small compartments, the mechanical power being derived from one common source, the provisions of the factory law should be made binding not upon each individual tenant and occupier but upon the owner of the entire building. He doubted, however, from the way the clause was drawn, whether the Home Secretary had avoided certain evils which he ought to have avoided. Was it intended, for instance, that a tenant of one of these compartments was to be under no liability for his own uncleanly habits or for over-crowding? Then with regard to fencing, was there to be no liability except upon the owner of the building? Of course it was right that certain provisions which related to the original construction of the building should be binding on, and should be enforced against, the owner of the building, but when these structural erections had been made, it stood to reason that the keeping of them in the condition in which they were legally required to be kept was a matter really under the control only of the tenant, and could not be said to be under the control of the owner of the building at all. As he read the clause, the owner of the ground rent escaped entirely, because by reference to the Public Health Act it appeared that the owner, who was going to be made liable, was the owner who drew the rack rent from the building. He passed from that clause with the remark that he doubted whether all these provisions relating to tenement factories had been made so fully as they should have been—a matter of consultation to all the parties who had a right to be consulted in the matter. No doubt certain consultations passed when the Bill of last year was in preparation, but he believed that there were additions to the Bill of this year, as to which there had been no such consultation of all classes concerned. And here he would warn the right hon. Gentleman that he would do well to be careful how he accepted the representations of certain parties as being generally and exclusively the views of the working classes. He could speak for one large constituency where he believed that to admit such clauses put forward on behalf of certain organisations, which had been in communication with the Home Secretary, and to represent them as being exclusively the views of the working classes, would raise a smile rather then anything else. Clause 22 provided that where grinding was carried on, in one of those tenement factories, certain very stringent regulations, scheduled in the Bill, were to come into force. It might be right, no doubt, that there should be instantaneous communication between the place where the grindstone was situated and the place where the central motive power was situated. But this provision was not complete, nor was it equitable, unless there was a penalty attached to the improper use of the communication. If such a provision was necessary at all, it would, of course, involve a good deal of expense, and they must not expect too much from it in the way of protection or safety to life, because accidents, which arose out of grinding, mainly proceeded from the breaking of the grinding wheels and the scattering of their fragments in all directions, killing the men who might be in the way. When that happened it was, of course, too late to save life by stopping the machinery. The regulations in the Schedule formed the most important part of the clause, and with regard to them one question arose, the answer to which was not provided in the Bill. The owner was made liable to put certain appliances in certain positions and to maintain them there. Was it clear, where the owner had let these compartments to tenants, that he had not parted with his right of entry into these places? Where did the Bill restore to him the right of entry necessary to enable him to put these appliances into the position required by this measure. There were other provisions which had not yet been either explained or justified. Take Clause 3 for instance. What was the administrative experience which had made it necessary to fix an absolute term of one month as distinct from the "reasonable time" required by the previous law for the action of the local authority, when required to act by notice from the factory inspector? Had there been any, and if any what, action taken by inspectors under Sections 1 and 2 of the Act of 1891; and if there had been any, had the result been such as to show the necessity for fixing this absolute term of one month? The term of one month might not only be less than a reasonable time; it might be more than reasonable time. It might be too long, and might be an absolute weakening of the present law. There were a multitude of other provisions which might be the subject of explanation. There was Clause 13, sub-section 4, which related to exceptions, allowing night work in what might be called non-incidental processes in the industry of the factory. That might be right or wrong; but at any rate they should have a statement of the kind of abuses which had made such a provision necessary. Clause 14, relating to work outside the factory, except during the period of employment, was one to which public attention ought to be drawn. By that clause, children, young persons, and women, although they had not been employed in the factory throughout the period during which they might be employed, were not to be allowed to do work at home, on the business of the factory at any hour after the period of employment—in other words, if they work home work, they were not to be allowed to put one hand to the work after seven strikes, although they might have been playing themselves for hours before. The House ought to be told something of the abuses which had led to the introduction of so strange a provision. Clause 26 was a very important one, because it extended the Special Rules Clause of the Act of 1891 to modifying or limiting the period of employment of certain classes of persons. That not only applied to the employment of women, and was directed, possibly, at restricting, if not prohibiting, their employment in certain industries; but the clause went further, because its object evidently was to withdraw this kind of prohibition from the cognisance and control of this House. In future, if this clause came into operation, women and others of the protected classes would be liable to have their hours of labour "modified and restricted" even to the point of prohibition, at the direction, not of the Secretary of State, though upon his initiative; not even of this House, which had hitherto been considered the only authority competent to deal with such a matter, but at the instance and on the direction of mere arbitrators, or two arbitrators and an umpire sitting and deciding between them. He submitted this was not the way in which legislation of this important character should be made operative upon Her Majesty's subjects. There were various other clauses, of which Clause 37 was one, which had the effect of bringing certain classes under the protection of the overtime sections which were not under them before. He wanted to know whether it was intended that laundries should come under the overtime law as amended by this Bill, or whether they would come under the overtime law of the Act of 1878, for certainly as the Bill stands the words "as amended by this Act" were not present—[Mr. ASQUITH: "They are not necessary"]—and they required to be inserted. With regard to the particulars clause, he would like to be assured that the Home Secretary had the concurrence, in making these proposals, of the most skilled authorities on the subject, and amongst them Mr. Birtwistle (who was, amidst general approval, appointed inspector to carry out these provisions in 1891), and whether they were really demanded by the great bulk of the operatives themselves. With regard to Clause 39, it would be interesting to know whether it was intended to bring in workshops which existed before January 1st, 1879. He did not say it was wrong to do so, but it was not clear whether that was really the effect of the clause. Clause 40 enacted that the occupier must send to the inspector lists containing the names of persons employed upon the business of the factory, or the workshop outside the factory or the workshop. Something to that effect was enacted by the Act of 1891, and the present provision proposed to make it more stringent. But there was a curious phrase at the beginning of the clause which had the effect of restricting its application to those establishments to which the law of 1891 for the time being applied. Did that mean only to those establishments to which that law was made applicable by the Secretary of State, for to bring the law of 1891 into operation an order of the Secretary of State was necessary. He had nothing further to say with regard to the details of the Bill. There remained, of course, the great question, perhaps not strictly relevant to the Second Reading of the Bill, because it was not touched by the Bill—the employment of children between the ages of 11 and 12 years. That was a question upon which only the representatives of certain constituencies had any very strong feelings or were impelled to take any very active Parliamentary course. But it was extremely instructive to see the marked difference in the attitude of a certain party in the House before the Debate of 1891 and during the whole time since. The House would remember that after the Conference at Berlin a great deal of indignation was expressed that in the Factory Bill of 1891 it was not proposed to raise the minimum age at which children should be admitted to industrial establishments. Good and sufficient reasons were advanced for that course, but they were not sufficient to allay the rising tide of indignation, that the House by a very striking vote, in which the Government of the day was defeated, gave effect to the feeling expressed. Was the limit of age at once raised to the standard of the Berlin Conference? Nothing of the kind. Those who had been most furious became at once most remarkably timid, and the utmost they could be persuaded to do when led up to the point was to say in the most hesitating tone that perhaps they might be ready to go so far as to raise the limit by the extraordinary period of twelve months. Four years had elapsed, and it did not appear that to go even twelve months further was a matter to which the present Government could persuade themselves to rise without the impulsion of what he might call the great body of independent opinion in the House. He did not say that with the view of dissuading them from taking that course if they thought fit; but the retrospect was an instructive one. What had inspired caution then no doubt inspired caution now, namely, the fact that, although the Berlin Conference desired to place all children under one general protective limit of age, there were States in which the limit of that protection was lower than it was in this country, whilst it was felt that a time when this country was experiencing the effects of severe foreign competition was not one at which additional restrictions, which were not in force in other States, should be imposed upon its industries. In conclusion, he could assure the right hon. Gentleman opposite that he would receive the loyal assistance of hon. Members with whom he acted in passing this Bill, although some of its provisions were undoubtedly of a controversial character, and would have to be carefully considered. He trusted, however, that the right hon. Gentleman would not adopt an uncompromising attitude with regard to amendments that might be moved in Committee, and that by means of concessions on both sides, the Bill might receive the Royal Assent during the present Session, and would have a permanent and beneficial effect upon the industries of the country.

*Mr. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) said, he was sure that the House would extend to him that indulgence which was usually accorded to hon. Members who, like himself, rose within its walls for the first time. Another reason that he had for asking for that indulgence was that he had always taken a great interest in this subject, and had had considerable practical experience with regard to it, having had four years' training in a factory and nearly three years at the Home Office. As secretary to the White Lead Committee, he had had brought to his knowledge the peculiar dangers of the white lead manufacture, and the difficulties with which those responsible for the administration of the law had to contend. The Bill before the House was a large, complicated, and technical one, but it was based upon plain, broad, and recognised principles. He would classify his remarks under three headings. The provisions of the Bill successfully coped with dangers that might be less visible and apparent, but were no less real than those against which the original Factory Acts were directed, while they were more subtle and insidious, and certainly presented formidable obstacles to the attainment of a high standard in the conditions under which manufactures were conducted. It had been argued by a certain class of persons that it was better that some risk should be run than that a large number of women should be thrown out of employment and turned out into the streets. Upon this point the White Lead Committee had recommended that women should be excluded from five processes in white lead works, and from certain processes in the manufacture of pottery and explosives. The Committee, in their Report, said:—

> "(*a*.) It is known that if lead (in any form), even in what may be called infinitesimal quantities, gains entrance into the system for a lengthened period, there is developed a series of symptoms, the most frequent of which is colic.
>
> "(*b*.) A form of paralysis known as wrist-drop, or lead palsy, occasionally affects the hands of the operatives. There is, in addition, a form of acute lead poisoning, most frequently met with in young girls from 18 to 24 years of age, which is suddenly developed, and is extremely fatal. In it, the first complaint is headache, followed, sooner or later, by convulsions and unconsciousness. Death often terminates such a case within three days. In some cases of recovery from convulsions total blindness remains.
>
> "After duly considering all the evidence, the Committee have come to the conclusion that (*a*) women are more susceptible to lead poisoning than men, and (*b*) young girls than full-grown women. On an analysis of the evidence of the doctors whom they have examined, it will be found that on question (*a*) this is the opinion of eight out of thirteen, and that only four dissent: while on (*b*) fourteen doctors agree while three disagree."

The question before the Committee in this state of circumstances was, what steps could they take to mitigate, if not to terminate, wide-spread hereditary and, too often fatal, disease. The alternatives which the Committee had before them were these: to forbid the production of white lead, to alter the method of its manufacture, to impose certain restrictions which might mitigate disease, but could not be effective in all cases, or to exclude women altogether from the manufacture. After prolonged inquiry, the Committee came to the conclusion that in view of the insidious and deadly nature of the poison involved in the manufacture of the lead no half measures should be adopted, and they arrived at this drastic recommendation:—

> "The Committee are aware that the enforcement of some of the recommendations they have made may appear to operate hardly upon the manufacturer. But they would point out that each of these reforms is actually in force in some works in the United Kingdom. The greatest change recommended by them is the exclusion of females from all direct contact with white lead. The Committee have seen

four works where no women are employed in the white beds, in the stoves, or in packing. Judging from the experience they have had, they do not believe the number of women who would have to be replaced owing to this provision can be more than 600.

In the 5th and final Report of the Royal Commission on Labour, which no one could accuse of having overstepped the bounds of reason in its reforming zeal, the following remarks were to be found—

> "We are aware that any reform of this kind* would probably . . . . throw altogether out of employment a number of persons who are now making a bare livelihood under bad conditions, and would thus, until things had re-adjusted themselves, increase rather than diminish distress. . . . but we think that, in the long run, the permanent gain to the community would much more than repay the temporary loss. We believe that to secure better sanitary conditions to all those engaged in the class of industries under consideration would prove to be the first step towards the eventual elevation of their whole standard of life, and the improvement of the conditions of labour in all other respects."

The women's trade unions desired that this clause should remain in the Bill. The Yorkshire textile operatives, the Lancashire weavers, and cardroom operatives, and other societies of female workers had all petitioned in favour of the retention of the clause. It had been asserted that the general influence fo the Factory Acts, by discouraging the employment of women, reduced the value of their labour, and thus indirectly encouraged prostitution. That was an old argument which was disposed of in 1877 by the report of a Factory Inspector, who said of the Factory Law—

> "It has encouraged the employment of women rather than otherwise, their average earnings since it came to be enforced have increased in a large proportion, and not a single fact can be adduced, which would even appear to support the monstrous assertion that it affords encouragement to vice and prostitution."

This Inspector also said respecting textile manufactories—

> "Here the restrictions upon women's work are the most stringent, and yet the proportion of women employed has steadily increased."

This official also pointed out that an important and very substantial advance had taken place in the remuneration given to women for their work. These references would, he hoped, lead the hon. Member opposite to the conclusion that the objection which he had raised was a theoretical rather than a practical one. He now came to the second reading, under which this subject could be considered. He referred to that part of the Bill which dealt with trades to which the Factory Acts had not been previously applied. There had been an advance of public opinion, a quickening of the public conscience in this matter which had led to a demand for the inclusion within the scope of the factory law of certain industries at present exempted from its operation. There had been a development of the old simple industries; there had been the introduction of dangerous machinery, and there had been an extension of the area of inspection. All these circumstances had encouraged a demand for the inclusion of certain new trades within the law. There was, for instance, the question of laundries. The present condition of the law was that laundries were, for purposes of sanitation, in the same position as workshops under the Act of 1891, and were consequently only subject to inspection under the local authority. He questioned whether this state of things had led to any substantial improvement and he could adduce testimony to show that the factory Inspectors had not received any material assistance from sanitary authorities. But as regards hours of labour, the safety of machinery, the employment of young persons, and industrial inspection generally, laundries were under no control whatever. The Royal Commission on the Factory Acts, that sat in 1876, recommended that laundries should be placed under the factory law. The Women's Protective and Provident League of Glasgow had passed a resolution in favour of the inclusion of laundries on the grounds of excessive hours of labour, irregularity of work, and unhealthy conditions of work, the temperature of laundries being sometimes as high as 86 degrees. Finally, the Royal Commission on Labour had recommended that laundries should be included. He thought he had mentioned very good reasons for effecting the proposed change. If time permitted he could give many instances of laundries where work was carried on under deplorable conditions. In Glasgow, for example, there was a case in which the hours were from 6 to 9 on five days in the week, and from 6 to 10 on Saturdays, deducting an hour a day for dinner there remained 85 hours of work in a week. In a case at Newcastle the hours were 64 per week, and the Inspector remarked with reference to this case—

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*Certificate sufficient sanitary condition and sufficient cubic space.

> "This laundry was in a very bad condition, no ventilation at all, and space very limited."

It was impossible to avoid the conclusion that there was no ground for the exemption of laundries, except the general argument, which he had already attempted to deal with, as to the restrictions upon adult female labour. When, further, they bore in mind that the Executive had appointed lady inspectors to inspect factories, and that they thus had the requisite machinery at hand, the case for the inclusion of laundries must appear overwhelming. It might be found, however, to be necessary, having regard to the special conditions under which the work of some laundries was carried on, to adopt some flexible system. The processes in a laundry were successive, and not simultaneous, and to provide for that condition of things it might become necessary to make some modifications of the Bill in Committee. He came now to the last branch of the subject. The Bill aimed at certain evils which existed in factories which were now and had been for many years under the Factory Acts, and proposed to make operative provisions which, owing to means of escape, were at present practically inoperative. The hon. Member who had preceded him doubted whether a landlord could be made responsible for the operation of the law in a tenement factory. Hitherto the difficulty had been to find some one to make responsible, because in a tenement factory there were so many occupiers. Clause 21 of this Bill and the next two clauses were designed to apportion the responsibility between the owner and the occupier. Owing to the existing difficulties, the Sheffield grinders had in the past had no protection from the law. The proposals now made were the outcome of joint representations by the Chief Inspector of Factories, all the Superintending Inspectors, and Captain Smith, to whom the Department were indebted for the zeal and interest which he had exhibited. These joint representations led to an inquiry which resulted in suggestions which were submitted to the Federated Trades Council of Sheffield, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Cutlers' Company. [Mr. STUART-WORTLEY: "The representations made to the Chamber of Commerce did not cover the provisions of this Bill."] It might be that the Cutlers' Company or the employers took some exception to the provisions of the present Bill—[Mr. STUART-WORTLEY: "Last year's Bill."]—but in the main they approved of them. In tenement factories there had been an excessive number of casualities, and the sanitary conditions of these factories were too often miserable. The Department anticipated the best results from the provisions inserted in this Bill. In considering such a measure as this, one was led to enquire how far it would reach, and how far it would affect those to whom its provisions extended. By it they would bring for the first time within the operation of the law all persons employed in docks, wharves, tenement factories and laundries; they would provide for thousands better conditions of employment, and secure for them greater safety in respect of life and health, and they would provide for them a larger amount of leisure and greater opportunities for relaxation. They would restrict overtime, and prohibit it in the case of young persons. By these means they would give the rising generation, with whom lay the promise of the future, larger opportunity for education, and a more generous allowance of recreation. What possibilities were presented to them by this bare statement of facts? More holidays, more health-giving pursuits, fewer dangers, better ventilation, less night work, less overcrowding. And yet they were told that they were wasting the time of Parliament, that their debates were mere shams, and that their discussions were only worthy of provincial debating societies. He could imagine no subject upon which the time of the House could be better employed than upon a Bill which would give vast masses of our people a better chance of making the best of those faculties which they had received from nature, and of those external conditions which had brought within their reach, but only too often to withhold from their grasp, the accumulated knowledge and stored-up experience of the society to which capital and labour, employer and employed, one and all, alike belonged.

Mr. G. WHITELEY (Stockport) said that, after a lifelong acquaintance with factory work, he was only too happy with be able to give a general support to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman. So far as regarded the class of trade with which he was connected—namely, the cotton trade, the Bill proposed no very startling innovation so far as Lancashire was concerned. It did not suggest anything in the nature of a fundamental alteration in the law as it existed at present, but rather developed existing legislation and brought it down so as to be abreast of the wants of the time. He must object to the remark of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that Gentlemen opposed to the Government would say that in bringing forward this measure the Government were wasting the time of the House. Possibly, with regard to some of the other measures of the Government that idea might be entertained, but he did not believe that any hon. Gentleman on his side of the House would say that a discussion like this was a waste of the time of the House. The time so occupied was, in his opinion, very well spent. While looking forward to the passing of this Bill into law, he might, perhaps, be permitted to express a hope that it might be looked upon as perfecting and completing for some time to come all that was required in the way of factory legislation. It was possible to have too much of a good thing, and he believed that in no other country in the world did there exist a system of factory legislation comparable to that in force in this country. No doubt, our system had been a great advantage to the workers in mills, factories, and workshops, but it must not be forgotton that continued alterations in the conditions under which work in factories was carried on were rather apt to hamper and harass trade, and might even have the effect of driving it out of the country. At the present time England was competing with the whole world. There was no market in which Great Britain obtained or held any preference whatever. That being the case, though, happily, up to the present we had held our own, still, if by repeated Factory Acts, increased stringency in the conditions under which factories were worked, was introduced, it would undoubtedly be a misfortune. Cotton factory hours in England were now limited to 56½ a week, and we were competing with the Continent, with Russia, and with other parts of the world, where, at any rate, as far as Russia was concerned, they worked up to 70 or 80 hours a week. Great quantities of machinery, too, were being imported into Brazil and into China, and that would have the result of ousting English goods from those markets. He spoke more for the operatives than for the masters when he said that he hoped that this would be the last Factory Bill that would be introduced for some time, on the ground that it was possible to legislate trade out of existence. In large manufacturing towns of Lancashire there were 3,000 or 4,000 children coming out of the schools every year for whom new work was required, and at the present time that new work was not forthcoming. Emigration was the only panacea for the evil, but if the children went abroad they would be employed under far worse conditions than at home. This Bill would probably be referred to the Grand Committee on Law, and as there were a large number of members connected with factories, who were not on that Committee, they would probably desire to say a few words on the Bill. He was glad that the Home Secretary had not dealt with the question of half-time. There were many Lancashire and Cheshire Members who would oppose to their utmost any proposal to raise the age for half-time. That was a matter upon which there was a very strong feeling in Lancashire, and a resolution had been passed at a meeting of representatives of the textile workers held at Stockport, to the effect that any increase in the age for half-time would be a cause of great hardship to the operatives who, on account of low wages and other circumstances, depended in a great measure on the earnings of their children; that the present limit was quite high enough, and that the health of the children did not suffer from entering the mills at the present age. He believed himself that if a comparison were made between different localities, it would show that the general death rate in the manufacturing towns, where children entered the mills at an early age, was as low as elsewhere, and that the adult death rate was considerably lower. The first provisions of the Bill seemed to him most valuable, so far as the cotton industry was concerned. There was no question that those factories which did not give the accommodation set forth in the Bill, ought either to be closed or made to conform with the provisions of the Bill. As to Clause 8, to which he desired to call attention, and which dealt with the cleaning of machinery in motion, it would, in his belief, be often more honoured in the breach than in the observance; for there was a great deal of machinery used in the cotton industry which could be cleaned while in motion by young persons with perfect immunity from danger. In a weaving machine there was no danger, and the cleaning might be carried out more perfectly while the loom was running than when it was stopped. He ventured to say that neither the Home Secretary nor this clause would prevent young persons from cleaning their looms when in motion, if by so doing they could get to their dinners a quarter of an hour earlier. He had been asked to lay before the House certain Amendments agreed upon by the Spinning Trade Association, both operatives and employers of Lancashire, and one of these Amendments was that this 8th Clause should be operative only so far as it related to dangerous parts of machinery, and in that Resolution and Amendment he most heartily concurred. As to Clause 9, if it was passed in the form in which it now stood, it was possible that a great deal of hardship would result, especially to those people who had old mills, and were desirous of altering the machinery in them. In new mills nobody would object to the space of 18 inches being allowed between a self-acting machine, and any fixed structure, but in the case of old mills, where there was not sufficient width, a great deal of hardship might be inflicted. The Amendment which the Spinning Trade generally in Lancashire desired to see carried was—that, so long as machinery was erected on the site of the former machinery, it should not be subject to this clause. He now came to Clause 12, which, it seemed to him, was rather roughly drafted. He would like to see some definition of "injury to health." As the clause now stood it would only benefit the lawyers, for it would certainly give rise to a great deal of litigation. As to Clause 13, he believed it would greatly injure the dyeing trade, unless the exemptions, which the old Act contained in favour of the trade were continued. The House was very well aware that the dyeing trade was entirely a seasonable trade, in which a great amount of short time was worked. The operatives, therefore, looked forward to a busy time of the year when they would be able to work overtime, and so bring up the average of their earnings. Therefore he ventured to suggest to the Home Secretary that if the clause were carried without exempting the dyeing trade, great hardship would be inflicted on the people engaged in the trade. With regard to the clause dealing with tenement factories, several of the subsections would, he thought, bear very hardly on the trade, and this he hoped to see altered in Committee. These and other details were somewhat technical and dry, but he hoped that hon. Members who were acquainted with them would have an opportunity of expressing their views in regard to them. In general, the provisions of the Bill were drawn with a good object, and when fairly sifted and threshed out in Committee, with the assistance of some Members able to deal with these matters in a practical way, he believed that the Bill would become a workable measure.

*MR. HENRY BROADHURST (Leicester) said, that he was in the happy position of being able to give a very general support to the Bill. He had no criticism to offer as to its going too far or too fast; and, in venturing to offer a few criticisms upon those points in which the Bill did not go as far as it might, he fully realised that his right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, would himself desire to go further, and he trusted that after to-night's Debate his right hon. Friend might be encouraged to greater deeds. This Bill did more than any other measure that he remembered since he had taken part in labour legislation, in recognising the value of the lives and limbs of the workers of this country, and so far as it did so that was a wise recognition. Everyone knew that we must depend upon the stamina, character, and health of the workers to maintain our supremacy amongst the industrial nations of the world. The Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) showed a desire to minimise that part of the Bill which proposed to follow the work from the factory or workshop into the cellar or garret of the worker. He regarded this, however, as one of the most valuable and important parts of the Bill. Of what value was it to regulate the day labour in the factory or workshop and then to allow the workers to take home a large amount of work on which they might employ whole families, perhaps, through the night hours? One of the objects of such legislation as this was to follow the sweater to his lair, and there destroy him if it were possible. In regard to the last speaker he understood that hon. Member to say that there were parts of machinery which could be cleaned whilst in motion by the youngest persons employed in the factory. It was a very large request for the hon. Member to make, to ask the House to endorse such a statement as that. In his own opinion it was not fit and proper that children of 11 or 12 years of age should be employed to do that work, and he, therefore, welcomed that part of the Bill as a great advance in protective legislation.

Mr. WHITELEY said that his statement was that young persons could clean large parts of machinery with perfect immunity, and that this Bill would not prevent them from so doing.

*Mr. BROADHURST remarked that he did not wish to prevent the hon. Member from withdrawing his words, and he was very pleased to find that the hon. Member had seen the error of his ways at this early stage. ["No!"] The hon. Member's words were: "There is no danger to the youngest." However, passing from that, he would have been glad if the Government could have seen their way to prohibit overtime, in the case of females, all round and on every occasion. In regard to laundries, he believed that the Government would receive almost universal approval from all classes of the community, and from both sides of the House, in their well-intended effort to deal with the great and crying national evil of slavery in our laundries, and he believed that the House would stand by the Clause in the Bill which dealt with it. He himself had heard a great many laundry-women asking in plain, determined, and unmistakable language, for a provision of the kind now proposed. He had also heard that a great many ladies, whose only knowledge of the laundry lay in sending their linen there, were against the control of laundry work, because they believed that it would do great injury to the workers, but those ladies, not being workers, could not be accepted as such good authorities on the point as the workers themselves. He hoped that his right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, would not object, at the Committee stage, to some limitation of the hours of work in workshops called bakeries. There would, he thought, be a general desire to give some consideration to a proposal of that kind, and he would himself propose it, if no one else did. Clause 13, dealing with the temperature in workshops and other places, was a very humane proposal indeed, but he would ask his right hon. Friend whether he would consider the possibility not only of seeing that the temperature should not go below 60°, but also that it should not be above 80° or 90°, because he was sure that many girls in crowded rooms in great cities suffered as much from over-heated atmosphere as they did from cold. He thought that this was a subject to which the attention of hon. Members might well be directed when the Committee stage was reached. Clause 33, dealing with sanitary accommodation for the two sexes, merely carried out and enforced upon the worst class of employers the conditions already observed by the best classes of employers, and therefore the Home Secretary was only doing an act of justice to those who had already recognised their duties in this respect. He had been in factories where the sanitary arrangements were as satisfactory as anyone could wish or desire. In regard to Clause 38, he would suggest to his right hon. Friend the insertion after the word "textile" in the first line, of the words "non-textile works" in addition. This would include many industries where the whole work was done by piece work. For instance, in the brass trade nearly every article was made by the dozen, or in other ways which brought it under the piece work system. In all the large firms the arrangements were perfectly satisfactory, but in a great number of the second and third class firms there was much difficulty on the part of the trades unions and the workpeople in obtaining satisfactory treatment from the employers. Statements were never properly made before the work was done, and often, though there might have been some agreement beforehand, yet when pay time came there were all sorts of wrangling, and the result was that the men were often cheated of the wages they had a right to expect. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would have no difficulty in accepting an Amendment to meet that point. With regard to Clause 22, he regretted that the right hon. Member for the Hallam Division did not take a broader view of the matter when he was criticising the clause; for in his opinion the clause related to one of the worst and blackest spots in our industrial system. The Bill, as it stood, certainly proposed some measure of control over the workplaces of the men; but it did not go to the root of the evil, the extent of which was perfectly well known in Sheffield, especially to the medical profession. In the four years from 1888, more than half the cutlers and grinders who died in Sheffield died from throat and chest disease, and he maintained that under proper conditions of labour this alarming death-rate might be seriously reduced. The disease of which he had spoken was brought about not so much by the ordinary pressure on the chest in the course of work as by the inhalation of the particles of stone and steel largely through working in confined and ill-adapted places. In speaking of the conditions under which men worked in the neighbourhood where the tenement factory system and grinding shops were most prevalent in Sheffield, the Medical Officer of the town said—

> "Houses of the poorest description, with damp walls and cellars, in many instances standing several inches deep in water, contaminated with sewage and giving out foul gases into the rooms above; courts confined and occupied by large, sodden privy-middens so near to the dwelling that ventilation becomes impossible and absolutely dangerous; sink-pipes discharging in the channels, usually defective, and allowing the slops to form stagnating pools before reaching the gullies, which are situated often 50 yards away; or, what is worse, permitting of percolation into the soil of the yard. All these conditions exist in many parts of the district, and no doubt are largely accountable for the high death rate. At present almost every available foot of ground is occupied, if not by houses by privies, stables, or outhouses; the air is stagnant and the ground polluted with sewage and decomposing matter."

He regretted that in those circumstances the hon. Member for the Hallam Division did not seem to fully approve of Clause 22.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I expressly said that I approved the general principle of it.

*MR. BROADHURST had no desire to misrepresent the hon. Member, but the hon. Member certainly conveyed to his mind that he thought the clause went too far. His own desire was to go to the root of the question and to deal with it thoroughly. The population of Sheffield as a whole was 16·5 per acre, whereas in North Sheffield—the district in which the work to which he had referred was carried on—it was 234·1 per acre. Then as to the death rate in Sheffield—for the town as a whole it was 23·5 per 1,000; in the Hallam Division it was 12·5, whilst in the North Division, where the grinding work was largely carried on, the death rate was 33·4 per 1,000. Now, he wished to make a suggestion at this point. The right hon. Gentleman might not be able to deal with it in the present Bill, but he might promote it in other ways and direct the public mind to it. The town of Sheffield as a whole was a rich and enterprising town, and it had a great municipality of which any place might be proud. Why, then, could not the town inaugurate and build municipal workshops to take the place of the horrible dens and death traps to which he had drawn attention? There was no reason why such a scheme should not be carried out, and every man who had a grindstone could pay a small rent for working it in the municipal workshop. The municipality would thus give the worker a healthy and convenient place in which to labour, and at the same time they would be able to secure an ample return for their expenditure. At any rate, he was sure such a plan would cause quite a revolution in the health and comfort of the great mass of workers, and the suggestion was one which he earnestly hoped would be practically followed up. Another difficulty which was often met with was the question of ventilation in the factories and workshops after the places were erected. This was a point that could well be dealt with in this Bill; for why should not the matters of ventilation and drainage be dealt with before the factories and workshops were erected? Why should not the plans of those places be submitted to proper inspection before they were built? No railway line could be opened for passenger traffic until it was certified by the Board of Trade, and he contended that inspection was quite as necessary in the case of the erection of factories and workshops as in that of the construction of a railway. If all the plans were submitted for inspection before the erection of the building the ventilation and sanitary arrangements could be provided far more cheaply and effectively than after erection. He instanced the cases of a factory and a great public school in his own constituency, where the ventilation and other arrangements were excellent because this course had been adopted. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to provide for this when the Bill reached the Committee stage. With regard to the question of half-timers he thought the hon. Member for Stockport had exaggerated the feeling of the operatives in Lancashire. A short time back he had formed one of a deputation to his right hon. Friend to ask him to raise the age of half-timers to 12 years, and on that deputation they had chairmen of School Boards from Yorkshire and other places, and clergymen; and they were assured by the hon. Baronet who sat for one of the divisions of Manchester that, amongst the operatives in that part of Lancashire, there had been a great modification of the feeling which opposed the age being raised to 12. He knew how important it was in the cotton industries that children should be trained early in order to become accustomed to the rapid processes of manipulation, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman might very well submit to the Committee a proposal to raise the age of half-timers from 11 to 12 years so as to gauge the feeling of the Committee. He believed public opinion outside would support him in that attempt; certainly the feeling of the House on both sides would in the main support him. He most cordially approved of the Bill, which was one of the best he had ever seen introduced for the protection of the lives and health of women and young workers. He hoped the Bill would rapidly become law, when it would be of great profit to the country, and a credit to the House of Commons,

*Mr. B. L. COHEN (Islington, E.) said, that in the interesting and lucid speech in which the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Bill he said he was anxious to make it non-controversial. He was sure the Bill would be accepted by the House in that spirit. It was probably too much to expect, and he did not suppose the right hon. Gentleman did for one moment expect that none of the provisions would give rise to—he would not say controversy—but to any difference of opinion, and he was glad to observe that on one point—the minimum age at which children could be employed—the right hon. Gentleman not only expected but almost invited Amendment. He did not intend at this stage to refer to details, which in his opinion required alteration, or at any rate needed some discussion before being accepted. They would have an opportunity upstairs of referring to these details, but perhaps the House would bear with him for a few moments if he mentioned some points which were a little more important than Committee details. He acknowledged that the Bill had been framed with great care, and believed it to be a most valuable measure. In suggesting any amendments to it they would not be acting in any spirit of hostility. The right hon. Gentleman must already have gathered that he could rely upon all parts of the House in an endeavour to make the Bill that perfect, useful, and beneficent measure which he desired. Parliament by its legislation had recognised the advance of public opinion in the direction of requiring greater protection for the safety and health of the labouring classes, and if further legislation was required now, as it certainly was, it was because the people in charge of factories and workshops had not themselves recognised that advance. He regretted that he was obliged to say that the employers of labour in the East of London were very serious offenders in regard to the consideration shown to those in their employ, but they were not by any means the only offenders. He was glad the Bill would apply to the employers of labour in the East End, but the Government itself was very far from being innocent, and he hoped the provisions of the Bill would apply as rigorously to Government Departments as to small private employers of labour. He was not quite convinced of the necessity for the prohibition of young persons from cleaning machines in motion. This work doubtless required experience, and might be said to be in a sense perhaps dangerous, but it was not physically hard work, and he thought it rather drastic to say that no person under the age of 18 should be told off for this work, especially bearing in mind the valuable provision as to the minimum distance of 18 inches from any fixed structure, which removed a frequent cause of danger. The worst defect in our factory and sanitary legislation was, he thought, not so much the inadequacy of the legislation as the difficulty of setting it in motion, and he was very grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for providing for the speedy action of the machinery which he was creating by this Bill. He now came to overtime; and while he approved and welcomed the most rigorous provisions with regard to insanitary places where work was done, he shared, to some extent, the misgivings on this subject of his right hon. Friend the Member for East Birmingham. He would not press the point too much at the present moment, but it seemed to him that the Bill made very wide and very sweeping changes perhaps a little too suddenly, and he was not convinced that it was necessary to abolish overtime altogether for persons under 18. The hours and number of days for such persons might, and certainly should, be clearly and humanely defined. All he said was that this Bill seemed to go too far, and he doubted if it would be in the interests of the class they wanted to benefit to abolish overtime altogether. Similarly with regard to overtime for women. The right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged it would be impossible to abolish overtime for women, and his Bill did not attempt it. But had he not restricted it too much? He (Mr. Cohen) hoped he need not say he made these remarks not in the least in the interest of the employer of labour, be he or be he not a sweater But he did not want unnecessarily to cripple the earning power of the wage-earner who had to struggle against fearful competition, and he did not want to drive away from this country industries which, he was afraid, were slipping away from us, and which it was to the advantage of all classes, but more to the advantage of the poor than the rich, to keep in our hands; and the very wise provisions as to the sanitary condition of the places in which the work has to be done—which he would not relax by one iota—of themselves suggest a doubt whether, under these circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman had not been too rigid as regards overtime. On the subject of the age at which children could be employed, he desired only to say that he agreed entirely with what was said by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consent, as he said, to have his hand forced. There might be, and doubtless there would be, at first some opposition to this change, but he was convinced it would soon disappear, and in a short time everyone would acknowledge that the provision was as wise as it was necessary. And now he desired to say a few words on the laundry question, which seemed to be the most difficult of all in the Bill. Hon. Members knew that a great deal of literature had been distributed on this question, most of which he had read, and he had carefully studied the reports of inspectors distributed last year as to hours of work and sanitary condition of laundries. On the whole, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had done well to include laundries in his Bill, but he thought if they were to remain there it would be necessary very materially to alter some of the provisions of the Bill so as to adapt it to the peculiar requirements of laundries. It must be remembered this avocation of washing differed essentially—in some very vital particulars—from any one that could be mentioned, and it was totally impossible to apply to it the same provisions which were applicable and necessary to other pursuits. There was first the question of overtime. He would say at once that if the provisions as to overtime, with reference to persons under 18, and with reference to women, were to be passed into law as they were framed in the Bill, he thought it would be impossible—it would be too cruel and too oppressive to a large and very struggling part of the population—to include laundries in the Bill. He should, personally, deeply regret their exclusion, because there could be no doubt of the mischief arising from humidity, from excessive heat, from damp feet, and he would admit also from excessive hours, and he quite recognised—nobody more willingly—that these were points which require and deserve control by legislation. But that was a very different thing from applying to this industry regulations which might be suitable—as he had said, he was not even sure of that—to other industries with which laundry work had hardly anything in common. The haphazard hours at which the work could be, and often must be, done made it a means of livelihood very valuable to some women, who would, but for this, perhaps be unable to gain their living at all. Many a widow, who had to struggle for the support of herself and perhaps a large family of young children, was obliged and was glad to seek laundry work, precisely because it could be done in those snatch hours which her domestic duties alone enabled her to devote to it, and the wife of an unskilled labourer was grateful for this small addition, obtainable in this way alone, to the too scanty earnings of her unskilled labouring husband. Such stringent provisions as this Bill would enact would crush out small laundries, and would contribute thus directly to the interests of big steam laundry proprietors, who would, of course, gain by the suppression of the small laundries. It would also be a cruel hardship to handicap, more severely than at present, women against men in an avocation which has been hitherto almost peculiarly a woman's pursuit. Already the introduction of steam power into laundries was telling very hard against the women. In 1881 the Census returns gave 3,408 men employed in laundry work. In 1891 the number had increased to 6,912, or more than double. While the men had increased 102 per cent. the women had only increased by 4·8 per cent. Then, again, it would be absolutely necessary, as suggested by Mr. Sprague Oram in his letter of 23rd October 1893, to Sir Godfrey Lushington, published in the Parliamentary Paper presented last year, that nunneries and charitable institutions should only be visited in case of complaint and under special instructions from the chief inspectors. He had himself some knowledge of the working of some of the largest charitable institutions, at any rate of the Metropolis, and he knew that the laundry work, which he regarded as part of the most valuable training given to girls in those institutions, could only be carried on in intermittent hours, which had to be worked in with the general administration of the institution. If he might say with respect, the right hon. Gentleman appeared to him, when he introduced the Bill, scarcely to have taken sufficient account of these vital points—they were not simple details—when he, in a few short sentences, told them he had decided to include laundries in his Bill. He (Mr. Cohen) would be glad for them to remain included, but he would rather see them left out than included, as they would be, in the text of the Bill. With regard to bakehouses, the necessity for restricting overtime in them was far less important than the prevention of persons being buried alive in underground bakehouses, which must often be excessively unhealthy.

*MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said, he congratulated the Home Secretary on having produced a Bill that would do much to sweeten the toil of workers, and also to lessen the risk of personal injury in many dangerous trades. He hoped, however, that the age of half-timers would be raised. While acknowledging the good points of the Bill, he must point out that it had one great defect, and that was that it perpetuated instead of getting rid of the distinction between the powers of the Department's inspectors over factories and their powers over workshops. His own experience, and all he had heard from others, tended to show that if anything the powers of inspectors should be greater over workshops than over factories. At any rate the necessity for oversight was greater in workshops than it was in factories. As a rule a factory was built for a specific industry, with proper sanitary and other arrangements; but this was very often not the case with workshops, which were converted buildings, such as joiners' long rooms turned into workshops for some different trade, without any provision for the convenience of the workers, without proper ventilation, with defective sanitary arrangements, and without the requisite space to prevent overcrowding as in factories. Therefore, he would urge that means should be taken to put things back again into the position they were in before the passing of the Amending Act of 1891 as regarded the powers of inspectors over workshops. He would boldly amend the commencement of the first clause of the Bill by making it read instead of "A factory shall" that "A factory and a workshop shall for the purpose of Section 3 of the principal Act be deemed to be overcrowded," &c., and he would omit the words "and a workshop shall for the purpose of the law relating to public health," thus putting workshops on the same footing as factories as to overcrowding. It was true the hands of the factory inspector had been strengthened as far as overcrowding was concerned by the Act of 1891, but what had been given in one direction had been taken away in another, because the power of the inspector even with regard to factories was much limited by Section 2 of Clause 2, while as to workshops their position was scarcely regarded, because nothing could be done under the instructions of the inspector of workshops until the sanitary authority had failed to apply a remedy. The Clerk to the Sanitary Authority was very often the agent (in Scotland the factor) to the proprietor of the very premises that ought to be put in better order. The medical officer of the district was often the only medical man in the district, and naturally he would not be inclined to interfere if he could help it with the management of the works of his best patient. These motives did not always operate, but still one could easily understand that it was a difficult position in which a medical man found himself when he had to choose between his own interests and those of the workers under his charge as a public officer. Sometimes a workshop and a factory were in the same building and were connected by a staircase, and, while the inspector could prevent overcrowding in the factory, he could not do so in the floor below because no steam was employed there. He had to send up a report to the Sanitary Authority and to wait until the complaint was investigated. The red tape and the circumlocution reminded one of "the House that Jack built." The Inspector had to report to the Clerk to the Sanitary Authority, who laid the Report before his Committee, who gave instructions to a sanitary inspector, who gave 24 hours' notice, which allowed cases of overcrowding to be discontinued on the occasion of the visit of the inspector to the property. The Sanitary Inspector reported to the Sanitary Authority's Clerk, who, through the Committee, instructed the Clerk to take proceedings. It could easily be understood that in this wicked world this loss of time and these formalities were such serious obstacles to the application of a remedy that nothing at all was done. He, therefore, put it to the Home Secretary whether it would not be wise to revert to the original arrangement which was in force before the passing of the Act in 1891 with regard to the powers of inspectors over workshops. He had a Bill of his own with this object in view, unfortunately blocked by an hon. Member on the other side, but which he yet hoped might be allowed to go to the Grand Committee, so that it might be incorporated in this Bill—a course to which, he believed the Government would not be averse. He could not see why an inspector should not have the same power to remedy faults of sanitation, overcrowding, &c. in a workshop as in a factory. Clause 19 extended the Factory Acts to factory laundries for the purpose of securing their proper ventilation, sanitation and drainage; and he did not think the House would be able to discover any reason why a workshop laundry should have a different inspector from a factory laundry. Why, too, should a factory be subjected to less inspection because it was carried on by the members of one family? It would be necessary to introduce a new provision with regard to overtime to meet a practice which had grown up of working overtime in the morning, before the regular day's work began—a breach of regulations which it seemed to be thought it was more difficult for the inspector to check. Under the Act of 1891 the scale of penalties was varied for factories and workshops, but they ought to be the same; as certain employers in workshops would find it to their interest to pay small penalties and to defy the Act. He should be glad if the Home Secretary would ascertain whether galvanising was not an operation equally as poisonous as tinning and japanning. His main object in speaking, however, was to call attention to the difference in the powers of inspectors over factories and over workshops, and to ask the Home Secretary whether he would not seriously contemplate reverting to the principle which was in force before the passing of the Act of 1891.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he could not concur in the expression of opinion that had fallen from the hon. Member for Stockport, who spoke of this Bill as the completion of all necessary legislation. They heard the same opinion expressed when the Bill of 1891 was under discussion; but he believed there was no finality in factory legislation. The reason was that the standard of life and comfort was rapidly rising among the workers, whilst employers were more and more anxious to promote the elevation of their workpeople But in legislating for factories we must not forget the difficulties under which the textile and other industries were carried on, and we must not increase those difficulties by harassing legislation. The Bill bristled with penalties; he did not think he had ever seen a Bill with so many penalties in the same number of clauses. Then in the Bill there was much legislation by reference, and he hoped the Home Secretary would take an early opportunity of consolidating these Acts, which were such a riddle and a puzzle that few but lawyers could understand them. He looked with some apprehension upon the increase of the powers of the central authority. In this department, as in many others, there were dangers from over-centralisation. In this connection he could not but have regard to the diminishing opportunities which the House of Commons had of criticising the action of the Government. He made no complaint with respect to the opportunities of discussing the Home Office Estimates of last year; but the House ought to be careful how they entrusted the Secretary of State with further powers without appeal or control. He should like to know why the right hon. Gentleman had fixed the number of cubic feet (in Clause 1) at 250. The cubic space necessary to health in any case depended very much on ventilation and the nature of the industry. To fix the exact number of cubic feet for every case was to carry legislation too far. In Clause 25 he noticed a new provision with reference to the use of lead. In past Acts of Parliament there had been useful provisions regulating the use of lead and other dangerous compounds, but this was the first absolute prohibition of the use of lead. Some burden of proof was imposed on the right hon. Gentleman in relation to this provision. As to the laundries, he did not know what was the state of opinion in the present Parliament, but in the last Parliament the subject was discussed several times, and ultimately laundries were excluded from legislation, not owing to any action of the employers or of polite ladies who had no knowledge of the subject, but owing to the wish of the workpeople themselves, who pressed the House of Commons so strongly that the proposed clauses were withdrawn. As representing a manufacturing district, he must refer to the subject of half-timers. Public opinion in this matter had advanced rapidly; but in the Parliament of 1891 the opposition of the workpeople to the extension of the age for half-timers was such that the late Home Secretary felt bound to accede to their wish. From inquiries in Wigan he found that the employers had no wish for the half-time system. The care of the children was onerous, and was hardly compensated. This was essentially a workman's question, and the parents of the children who had to provide for their bodily and educational wants ought to be consulted as to whether the labour of the children was necessary to their families. In many families, a difference of 3s. or 4s. a week meant a great deal, and the children were compensated for their labour by the additional comforts which it provided. The House did well when it raised the half-time age to 11; but whether the House would be right in so soon raising the age again to 12, must be decided by the parents who worked in the factories and workshops. The House was under obligation to the Home Secretary for dealing with the bakehouses. Their condition had long been a scandal, and had involved the sacrifice of many lives. He hoped that what had been believed to be the necessities of the Trade would be found necessities no longer. Another clause to which no previous speaker had referred, but to which he attached great importance, was that which made Good Friday a holiday. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would adhere to that clause. Many factory workers in Bradford had felt it a hardship that they should have to work on Good Friday, when they desired to join in the solemn celebrations of the day. He sympathised with what had been said as to the change made in the law by the Act of 1891. At the time he felt great doubts whether his right hon. Friend was right; though on the whole he was glad that the law was then changed; but now the time had come when the subject ought to be reconsidered. It was, however, totally impossible for an Inspector to be everywhere. He must act through local instruments, and none was more fitting than the local authority elected by the ratepayers of the district. The provision in Clause 27 for the notification to the Chief Inspector of certain diseases arising from causes necessarily connected with the industry was reasonable; but he was not sure that the provision for the notification of other diseases quite unconnected with the industry, was salutary. He did not wish to decrease the responsibility of the local sanitary authority, or to establish a duplication of authority. One authority should be wholly responsible. He was glad to see the imposition, by Clause 6, of a penalty on any employer who allowed wearing apparel to be made in a building of which some inmate was suffering from scarlet fever or small pox. He had received reports of an alarming character on this subject from medical men. One medical nam in London had told him that he visited a scarlet-fever patient in a house where the most sumptuous dresses were being made, and one of these was actually laid out on the patient's bed. Clause 34, he thought, was somewhat retrograde in character. The law, as it stood, mentioned the hours of six to six and seven to seven; but did not mention the hours of eight to eight. Some years ago the question was before a Select Committee on which he served, and the Committee decided against the hours of eight to eight, because they thought there was a movement in favour of early closing. He also hoped that the House would not assent to the provision in sub-Section 3 of the clause, making four o'clock the closing hour on Saturday. He strongly desired to see Saturday afternoon a holiday throughout the country, and Parliament would act most unwisely in defeating that result. The Saturday afternoon holiday was the charter not only of the working-man, but of many other classes, to whom it assured a few hours of recreation. As to the Particulars Clause, his inquiries assured him that it was satisfactory as far as it went, but he had been approached on the subject by the tailoresses, a class entitled to sympathy. They stated that they were not fairly treated by many of their employers, and these people had asked him to submit to the consideration of the Home Secretary whether he could not amend Clause 38, so as to bring in the tailoresses. It was not a question which affected the small employer alone, and he thought that some consideration was due to this highly meritorious class of persons. He trusted that this legislation would lead to an improvement in the condition of the people whom it was desired to benefit, while not doing anything to cripple the trade of the country, or to increase any of the impediments which now hindered our trade and industry.

*Mr. WALTER HAZELL (Leicester) said, that as an employer who had worked under the existing Factory Acts, he could not refrain from paying his tribute of respect to the way in which the Home Office had carried out the provisions of those Acts, and to the steps which were being taken towards the further protection of the workers. He observed that as far as the industries connected with bakehouses and laundries were concerned, the fear of Foreign competition did not arise. Sections 2 and 4 of the Act provided that where the premises or the machinery were dangerous in the opinion of a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, the employer should be under an obligation not to use the premises or the machinery until they had been put in a fit condition under a penalty of 40s. a day. He asked why Parliament should not enact that a negligent employer, after repeated warning, should not be liable not only to a money penalty, but to imprisonment. This penalty indeed, should fall not only on the employer, but on the responsible manager or workman. The provision under Section 26, giving to the Home Secretary power to make conditions as to the treatment of dangerous trades, was one which might safely be left to the Home Office. As far as he had been able to observe the powers of that Department had been exercised in a reasonable way. His only complaint as an employer was that the visits of the inspectors were far less frequent and far more cursory than they should be, because they were undermanned. Section 30 dealt with the needful degree of warmth in workshops, and he thought the provision was one which might be employed with reason and moderation to add to the comfort of the workers. As to overtime, he showed that the ordinary working week under the Factory Acts was longer than the average week in many trades, so that considerable real overtime might be worked, even though legal overtime was forbidden. Moreover, he thought the time was approaching when young people should have the power, under the protection of the law, to enjoy some time for instruction in technical classes during the ordinary working hours. He also hoped that it would be possible to introduce in the Bill a change raising the age of half-timers from 11 to 13 years. He regretted that there was no provision in the Bill extending the period of four weeks within which it was prohibited to employ married women after confinement. He trusted that public opinion would advance even to the extent of abolishing the employment of mothers of young children in factories. He further objected to the use of the word "hands" in the schedule of the Bill as an unfitting term to be employed in describing our industrial population. Generally, however, he expressed the hope that the Bill would pass speedily into law.

MR. H. SETON-KARR (St. Helens), while joining in the approval which had been extended to the Bill, thought it would not be inappropriate to say a word or two with reference to some of its provisions. In listening to the Debate he observed that it had been left almost entirely to hon. Members on the Opposition side to point out the possible dangers of the Bill. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had criticised the Bill and then added that it did not go far enough; but he on the other hand thought that in some cases it might be found that it went a little too far. Foreign competition was at present very keen, and he thought everyone must be aware of the great danger of doing anything which would interfere with the prosperity and the trade of the country. He wished to call the attention of the Home Secretary to Clause 13, Sub-section 5. He represented a large industrial community; one of the chief industries in that community was the glass trade. Section 60 of the Principal Act of 1878 provided that young persons from 14 to 18 years were to work the accustomed hours in glass works. But Sub-section 5 provided that Section 60 of the Principal Act should only apply to persons 16 years of age and upwards. This meant that in the glass trade persons from 14 to 16 years of age were going to be deprived of their employment. He had received numerous letters from all classes of the men employed stating that this section would be ruinous to the glass trade. A large number of young persons were employed in this trade whose ages ranged from 14 to 16 years, and as he had seen those glass works in operation he could say that a more healthy, energetic, and lively class of boys no one could desire to see. These youths were employed under apprenticeship indentures, and if this section of the Bill were adopted apprenticeship would be abolished and the boys would lose their means of livelihood. The boys were at that age when they could most quickly gain a good knowledge of their special trade, and he asserted that no object was to be gained by raising the age. The parents would suffer by a withdrawal of the boy's earnings and a serious injury would be inflicted upon one of the staple industries of the country. He trusted the Home Secretary would pay heed to the deputation which was now seeking an interview with him on the subject. While the Debate had been proceeding he had received from the largest glass works in the kingdom the following telegram:—

> "Factory Bill. No Home Office appointment yet for deputation. To masters and men most pressing question—most vital. Can you press successfully for early appointment?"

He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would meet the deputation, and, having heard the case put before him by practical men, would, in Committee, amend the Bill by having the provision in question struck out. The Government had many other questions in hand, and it sometimes happened that the consideration of a Bill of this kind was relegated to the end of the Session, when there was no proper opportunity afforded of discussing its details. Occasionally injurious provisions crept into legislation of this character, but as to the point he had raised he trusted the Home Secretary would give the House a definite pledge. He had no wish to make this a Party question, indeed, he intended to support the principle of the Bill. But it must be remembered that upstairs there was the Grand Committee on Trade. What happened in that Committee Room he had not the faintest idea, as no report was given of what took place. ["Oh!"] Well, the proceedings were never fully published, and the majority of Members had no opportunity of taking part in them. He would like to see a Bill of this kind considered in Committee of the whole House. It was most unsatisfactory to have such questions as this Bill dealt with relegated to some mysterious Committee room. On what principle a Grand Committee was constituted he had no idea, but certainly many of those who represented industrial communities had no chance under the Grand Committee system of bringing important questions before the public. On that ground he had thought it right to occupy a few moments on the present occasion. If the Home Secretary did not himself propose an Amendment of the Bill in the direction he had indicated, he hoped some opportunity would be given him of moving it. While he intended to vote for the Second Reading if the Bill passed through Committee in its present form, he would certainly consider it his duty to strenuously oppose the measure in all its subsequent stages.

*MR. J. E. JOHNSON-FERGUSON (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said, he entirely agreed with the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigan (Sir F. Powell) that during the last few months the cotton trade of Lancashire had passed through one of the most serious periods of its existence, but as a Lancashire mill-owner of 20 years' experience, he had no hesitation in saying that, with one exception, there was nothing in the Bill to which a man who had felt it his pride and duty to maintain his works in a reasonably sanitary condition could properly take exception. When the Home Secretary introduced the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Matthews) expressed some doubt as to the wisdom of defining overcrowding. Looking at the matter from a practical standpoint he was exceedingly glad his right hon. Friend had defined overcrowding, because by doing so he had laid down a clear standard at which everyone must aim. The only point in connection with that section of the Bill of which he had to complain, was that his right hon. Friend reserved to himself the power of altering by Order the requirements as to the cubic air space to be provided in cases where artificial light was used. Every factory or workshop needed artificial light at some portion of the year, and, therefore, every factory and workshop might be affected by the Home Secretary's Order. What would be the position of an occupier of a factory or workshop? He might have erected his premises in the belief that he had conformed to the fullest extent to the provisions of the Act respecting cubic air space, and yet some day find that by an Order of the Home Secretary he was placed absolutely outside the Act. He did not contend that a larger cubic air space should not be allowed where artificial light was used, but he thought the Home Secretary would be well advised if, before the Bill left the House, he added a Schedule to it laying down what the cubic air space per person must be in buildings where artificial light was used. The power to close dangerous factories, and to limit the right of the user of dangerous machinery by an Order from a Court of Summary Jurisdiction was a most admirable provision. The fact that the Order was thus to be made would ensure for it a confidence and support it would certainly not obtain were it to be made by the Factory Inspector, acting on his authority alone. Complaint had been made as to the clause dealing with the cleaning of machinery while in motion. Personally, he wished the clause had gone the length of absolutely prohibiting the cleaning of machinery in motion by any woman. During the 20 years he had been interested in the management of a large concern in Lancashire, he had found that by far the larger proportion of the accidents was directly or indirectly traceable to the cleaning of machinery while in motion by women or young persons. A child worked as an assistant to some grown-up person, who exercised a supervision over it, whereas a woman or young person working independently often did not take the necessary care. He hoped his right hon. Friend would not yield with respect to that clause, and if he did make any change in it, it would be in the direction of extending it so as to include the whole of the women employed in factories and workshops. Then there was the provision as to a machine running within eighteen inches of a pillar or a projection in a building. He thought the Home Office had fairly tried to meet the difficulties of the case by the exemptions provided, but unfortunately the exemptions did not meet the entire case. He agreed with what the Member for Stockport had said as to mules. Owing to the enormous improvements which had taken place in recent years, mules are now much longer than they used to be. To gain this extra length when new machinery is placed in an old spinning mill, the mules are placed lengthways instead of across the mill. But that would not be placing the mules on the sites which they occupied before, and they would not therefore come under the exemption. He hoped, therefore, that the Home Secretary himself would modify the proposal in the direction he had indicated. The next point to which he wished to draw attention was the provision made in this Bill with respect to additional facilities for the escape of *employés* in the case of fire. He agreed as to the importance of these additional facilities, though he must say he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had adopted the best method for securing the object at which they all aimed. He did not think that anyone who had been present when one of these great mills was burnt down could help realising the terrible risk there was of the means of escape being cut off where there was only one staircase, and especially where the fire originated in the lower story. He had himself seen a serious risk of loss of life even in what was locally known in Lancashire as "a shed"—a building of one story — where a fire commenced close to the entrance of the shed. It was not through the flames that death took place; it was suffocation, owing to the immense amount of smoke and vapour generated. In that particular case which he himself saw, had there not been a second entrance to the shed there must have been a large number of persons suffocated, owing to the means of escape by the ordinary entrance being cut off. Now, on this point, he believed they in this country were very much behind other countries. He was informed on reliable authority that both in Germany and Russia no mill was allowed to be occupied until there was provided for every room in the mill two independent means of access. He had that information from a gentleman who had himself been employed in providing plans for some of the largest mills that had been erected in Germany and Russia in the last few years, and he was told that it was an imperative condition, before these mills were allowed to be worked, that there should be provided two independent staircases to the upper floors. Now what he wanted to suggest was—that far more secure means should be provided for escape in case of fire than were provided for in the Bill. There should be two separate and independent entrances to every room in a factory and workshop in which a certain number of persons were employed. The average cost of an outside iron staircase was, he believed, not more than about £15 per storey, and the total cost in a four-storey mill to provide a perfectly secure and independent means for escape would therefore only be about £45. Reference had also been made to limiting the hours of employment of young persons and women who were employed inside and outside a factory. He did not see any difficulty in enforcing this provision where the outside work was in connection with the factory. But where the work was not in connection he saw great difficulty. There were cases where a wife kept a shop while the husband and family went to the mill. How could they prevent the daughters assisting their mothers in the shop in the evening? Then there was the case of the letting of a mill, where the tenant sublet a portion with motive power. Who was to be responsible in this case for the provisions relating to tenement factories? He did not think the Bill dealt adequately with this question. With regard to laundries he could only congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having dealt with this question. Only a few weeks after the last election, a deputation of his constituents waited on him and urged most strongly that laundries should be included in the scope of the Factories and Workshops Act, and there was no portion of this Bill which he welcomed more cordially than this. He thought the provisions of the Bill would work hardly on one class. There were two limitations in this Bill—first, the laundry must be carried on for purposes of gain; and second, where the laundry was carried on by members of the same family living in the same house, it was exempt from the provisions of the Bill. Notice the effect of these limitations! A woman and her daughter who took in washing to maintain themselves might require the services of some other woman to assist them. Because that woman was called in the woman and her daughter would at once be brought within the scope of the Bill, while a family of half-a-dozen living in the same house, and carrying on a much larger laundry, would be exempt from the provisions of the Bill because they have no outside assistance. Then again, all laundries attached to private houses, to schools, hospitals, and public institutions of any sort whatever were entirely excluded from the operation of the Bill, because they were not carried on by way of trade, or for purposes of gain. He thought that every laundry in which what was known as "power" was used—whether it was a private laundry or a public laundry—should be brought under the scope of the Bill so as to ensure that the machinery was properly fenced and that the hours of the persons employed in it were regulated. If there should be any exemption at all to the application of the Bill, it should be in the way of exempting those laundries in which not more than a certain number of persons were employed, rather than by exempting laundries worked by the members of the same family or attached to public institutions. He also thought that occupiers of factories and workshops had cause for legitimate complaint in regard to Clause 32, which provided that every such occupier was to send to the Home Secretary before January 21st each year a correct return specifying the number of persons who were ordinarily employed in the factory or workshop, with such particulars as to the age and sex of the persons so employed as the Home Secretary might direct. What was the meaning of the word "ordinarily" as used in the clause? He had consulted many persons as to their understanding of the clause. Some told him they would be required to make a return of the maximum number of persons for the employment of which their machinery provided; others that it was the minimum number of persons employed which should be returned; while most of them expressed themselves as absolutely at a loss to say on what lines they ought to go in order to make up the list of persons ordinarily employed in their factories and workshops. Take as an illustration the case of the concerns with which he was connected. The number of the employés in those factories fluctuated by not less than 10 per cent. during the course of the year owing to the changes of fashion, and he should himself feel at a loss if he were called upon to advise the managing directors of those concerns as to lines on which they should make up the yearly return of persons they ordinarily employed. Then with regard to the particulars as to age and sex, did the Home Secretary imagine that if he called on an occupier of a factory or workshop to give him a detailed return of the age of every woman and child employed, such a return would be worth the paper it was written on? They all knew the difficulty of getting, for the purposes of the census, the correct ages of even their household servants; and everyone could give instances of the very small addition to the ages of women which took place, according to their own accounts, between one census and the next. It might be said that no Home Secretary would ever demand such a return. Then why were the words put into the clause? So long as such words remained the natural assumption was that they were intended to be exercised; and therefore no employer could feel himself secure in taking women into his employment unless he first insisted on having the certificates of their births. Indeed, if the clause were passed as it stood, a more appropriate title than "Home Secretary" for his right hon. Friend would be "Grand Inquisitor." A great deal was being said of the advantages of reducing the hours of labour. Many employers of labour believed that it would be perfectly possible to produce as much material in a textile factory by working nine hours with only one stop for dinner in the middle of the day, as was done at present by working 10 hours with two stops for breakfast and dinner. But they were prevented from trying the experiment owing to the provision, in one of the Factory Acts, against the employment of young women for more than four hours consecutively without a stop for meals. He would suggest to the Home Secretary that, in order to meet the difficulty, powers should be given to the Home Office to issue a licence to any textile concern that wished to work only nine hours instead of 10 hours, to dispense with the break at the end of four hours, and to work the nine hours in two sections of four-and-a-half hours each with an hour for dinner between. He believed that under such a system they could get as much work out of their machinery as under the present arrangement of a 10 hours' day. There would be a saving of time in the stopping of the machinery and the starting of it again at meal times; the cost of light in the early hours of the morning would be obviated, and there would also be the enormous advantage that, as the employés would start work after their breakfasts, they would be in a much better condition for getting through their day's labour, and could do it more comfortably than under the present arrangement, which required them to go to the factories at six o'clock and to rush away for half-an-hour to snatch a hasty breakfast, perhaps, just outside the works, when their homes were far away. He could only say, in conclusion, that the principles of the Bill had his entire sympathy, and he hoped the suggestions he had thrown out might tend to improve the Bill, or facilitate its easy and effective working in operation.

Mr. ASQUITH: Mr. Speaker, I intervene at this point of the Debate, not, I need hardly say, with any intention of suggesting that any other hon. Gentleman who may wish to address the House should not do so, but because the mass of criticism accumulates at such a rate as the Debate goes on, that I feel sure I cannot overtake it if I defer my remarks to a later stage, and my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who is assisting me in the conduct of this Bill, is in a position to reply to any further suggestions or criticisms which may be made. I would not be doing justice to the tone of the Debate if I did not very cordially acknowledge, on the part of the Government, the extremely friendly spirit in which this Bill has been received. Forcible and legitimate criticism of the Bill has come impartially from both sides of the House. I think it may be fairly assumed, from what took place on the First Reading of the Bill, and from what is taking place to-day, that this Bill falls within the category of non-contentious measures, to the improvement of which the energies of both sides of the House will be impartially directed. I will try to deal with all the points that have been raised in the course of the discussion, but if I am necessarily discursive and disjointed the House will make allowance for the situation in which I find myself First of all, with reference to the definition of overcrowding in Section 1, the hon. baronet the Member for Wigan asks why we have fixed the statutory *minimum* of 250 feet of cubic space. That is the *minimum* which, as a rule of thumb has been adopted and applied by the inspectors for years past after consultation with, and with the assent of, high medical authorities, and we are merely regulating a practice which is of old standing and doing what it is fair to do in these matters—namely, giving to employers] of labour and occupiers of factories and workshops notice that that is the *minimum* which the statute will require. I believe that no criticism has been directed against the figure of 250 in any quarter. I can only say it was arrived at after very careful consideration as the very lowest and irreducible *minimum* which is compatible with health and the decent conditions of work. Many employers of labour give a very much larger amount of cubic space, and we think it desirable to lay down a standard below which, at any rate, it shall not be possible for any employer to go. I pass to another point, and that is the question of provision against danger from fire, where we have provided that it shall be in the power of an inspector to apply to a Court of summary jurisdiction to require the occupier of a factory to provide movable fire-escapes. My hon. Friend who has referred to this matter seems to think that that is an insufficient provision. Perhaps it has escaped his memory that in the Act of 1891, passed by the late Government, there was a stringent provision which applied to all factories and workshops erected since that date, which required the sanitary authority to give approval to plans of buildings with special reference to the provision for escape from fire. The difficulty does not arise so much from new factories as from those which were already in existence. The Act of 1891 required the sanitary authorities, in the case of buildings where more than 40 persons were employed, to take steps to see that provision was made for the purpose of escape from fire. That is a duty which, I am sorry to say, sanitary authorities have generally neglected. So far as my inquiries have gone, there has hardly been a single case in which the sanitary authorities put that power in force; and we have thought it desirable to introduce this, which I hope will prove an effective provision, which will not require any structural alterations or impose any unnecessary expense or hardship, all that is demanded being that there shall be provided movable fire-escapes. Some criticism has been directed against the clause which deals with machinery. The prohibition of young persons from taking part in cleaning machinery in motion is, in my judgment, most absolutely necessary. As the House is aware, as the law stands at present, a child is prohibited from cleaning machinery in motion, and women and young persons are prohibited from cleaning certain classes of machinery. We propose to take the young person from the category in which he now stands side by side with women, and put him in the more protective category in which he stands side by side with children. A large number of injuries, involving life-long damage, are caused to young persons of 14 and 15 engaged in this most dangerous work, and I hope the House will not allow this provision to be in any way imperilled. As to the somewhat more technical question touched upon by hon. Members connected with the cotton industry as to the space between the possible range of the traversing carriage of any self-acting and the nearest fixed structure, we have fixed 18 inches, and I do not think that there will be any serious difference of opinion, but that it will be agreed that in all new factories to which it applies this provision should be carried out. So far as existing factories are concerned we have gone a considerable length in the way of concession, in saying that new machinery may remain in the space occupied by the old machinery so long as it takes its place. My hon. Friend wishes us to add to that concession and to say that where the whole of the machinery of a factory is taken out, and where the new machinery which previously ran across the room now runs the length of the room and will not require the same space as the old, yet, inasmuch as there was a less distance than 18 in. in the case of the old a similar distance should be permitted in the case of the new machinery. I cannot agree with that. Where the owner of a factory completely re-arranges his machinery, replacing it by machinery in a totally different direction, it is only fair that he should comply with this provision. The hon. Baronet the

Member for Wigan, referred to the provision in Clause 34, which enables—as an alternative option to that which at present exists—a workman who begins at eight in the morning to end at eight in the evening, instead of beginning at six and closing at seven, and he seems to be under the impression that there was lurking in the clause, an intention to abridge the holidays at present enjoyed, or that the work would be carried on so late in the evening that the clause might have that effect. Under the 42nd Section of the Act of 1878 this provision already exists in the case of a considerable number of specfied employments, with a power to the Secretary of State to add indefinitely to the list. That power has been largely exercised by Secretaries of State, with the result that in a large number of important industries these hours are statutory provisions. It was, therefore, thought more desirable to have this as a recognised statutory enactment and not to leave it in the discretion of the Secretary of State at the time. Another point raised by the hon. Baronet was as to Clause 25, which contains a prohibition as to the use of lead in the process of tinning or enamelling metal hollow ware cooking utensils. That is founded upon evidence given before, and recommendations made by, Committees that have inquired into these industries. I am satisfied that the best manufacturers do not employ lead, and that its use for that purpose is found to be most injurious, not to the workers, but to those who subsequently use the articles in question. My hon. Friend the Member for Leicestershire referred to the clause relating to statistical returns, which requires the occupier in each year to return the number of persons ordinarily employed in the factory, with such particulars as to age and sex as the Secretary of State may direct. He seemed to think that that was imposing an almost intolerable burden upon occupiers of factories. This clause is founded on the recommendations of more than one Committee of Inquiry, and I may point out to him that the burden which he seems to think the occupiers of factories would be unable to perform is one which is performed already, under statutory requirements, by the owners of every coal mine in the country. The Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887 prescribes in the Schedule the form of the return, the language used being "return of persons ordinarily employed during the year." I am not aware that the owners of these mines have found any practical difficulty in interpreting the words, and if there are any practical difficulties arising from a very much larger employment at one particular season of the year than at another, it is possible to modify the language of the clause to meet them. This country is lamentably backward, compared with many other countries, in regard to statistical returns of this character. I will say only a word with reference to the particular clause—Clause 38. No criticism, I think, has been made in the course of this Debate of the language of the clause, which has been the subject of most careful consideration, and I think we have arrived at a form of words which substantially meets the difficulty to the satisfaction of both parties. I am not at all indisposed to admit that it might be possible to amplify the clause in some particulars. I know that the hon. Baronet opposite, and the senior Member for Leicester have both expressed the opinion that this clause ought to be extended to other than textile trades. One of them, I think, instanced the case of the processes connected with the manufacture of brass, in which similar arrangements to those provided by the clause in regard to certain trades, might be desirable, and other trades,—that of the tailors, I believe, for one—had also been suggested. Upon that point I can only say that the information before me does not show at present the necessity of the adoption of the application of this clause to other than the textile industries. We have given it a very wide application in this Bill, but I think it worthy of consideration whether a power should not be added to the clause to enable perhaps the Secretary of State, by Order, to extend its provisions to other trades, if it was proved to his satisfaction that persons in those trades were paid by piece, and were paid under an arrangement such as those contemplated by this clause. If that is a suggestion which meets with general approval, I think we shall be happy to entertain it. Another point of detail touched upon the question of temperature. We have provided, by Clause 30, that in certain industries, such as the making of wearing apparel, the temperature should be kept up to not less than 60 degrees. That is a provision which is borrowed from the legislation of the State of Ohio in America. Complaints have been made to us by the lady inspectors who go through the shops in London and other large towns, that during winter a number of persons employed in dressmaking have to carry on their occupations in rooms which are either not warmed at all or very insufficiently warmed, and under conditions therefore of great discomfort and risk of injury to health. I have not had many complaints as to over-heating, and, indeed, my experience, and I think the experience of most employers of labour is, that while persons employed in industry are very sensitive to cold they are not nearly sensitive enough to heat, and that the best provisions which the Legislature makes, in regard, for example, to ventilation, are only too often defeated, because of the resolute determination of the workers to exclude fresh air or anything in the nature of a draught. So that I am afraid any limitation on that side would not be popular or secure the co-operation of those for whom it is primarily designed. As to the bakehouses, I propose, when we go into Committee, to add to the clause which deals with the subject, a provision prohibiting for the future the use of underground premises for bakehouses. I am satisfied, from what masters and men alike have told me, that both are agreed that for the future, the trade ought not to be carried on in under-ground cellars. Such a provision, I am sure, will meet with the general assent of this House. I pass to deal briefly with two or three topics which are of somewhat large scope. And first of all I would say a word on the point raised by way of protest against the transfer made in 1891 of the sanitary responsibility with respect to workshops from the central to the local authority, and by way of regret that I have not in this Bill brought back the sanitation of workshops within the scope of factory inspection. I confess I was one of those in 1891 who thought it a mistaken step, and I do not know that I have seen much ground to change my opinion. I know the grounds on which the right hon. Gentleman opposite proposed the change, and it is impossible to deny there was a great deal of foundation for it. If the whole time of Her Majesty's inspectors is to be taken up in looking after the drainage of every workshop in the country, either you must largely increase the staff or there is considerable risk of their attention and energy being withdrawn from their more proper business — namely, seeing that the hours of labour are not exceeded, that the machinery is fenced, and that generally sufficient industrial protection is afforded.

*Mr. HENRY MATTHEWS (Birmingham, E.): There is another ground, namely, that the local authority has the greater part of the sanitation of the very premises under its complete control, so that it is a case of too many cooks.

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not dispute that there was considerable ground for making the change. I am not prepared, after so short an experience, to revert to the pre-existing state of things, but I am bound to admit that there is a great deal of truth in the contention that local authorities as a whole have very ill-performed the duty which the right hon. Gentleman imposed upon them. I am glad to say that during the last year there has been a distinct change for the better. In London many of the local authorities have appointed inspectors for this purpose—not so many as there ought to be however—and the County Council, by their medical officer and his staff, wherever they have been applied to by Her Majesty's inspectors, have shown the greatest zeal in co-operating in this work and with the most successful results. There are other great municipalities—I may instance particularly Nottingham (which has been conspicuous), Hull, Birmingham, and some others—as to which there is no ground whatever for complaint; and in Scotland I need not say there is the great city of Glasgow, which has always been to the front in matters of this kind, and I may mention also, by way of parenthesis, my own county of Fife, which, though it does not contain any very large towns, has appointed an officer who is specially charged with this particular duty, which he is performing with very great success. But, with these exceptions, speaking of the country as a whole, we are compelled to admit that there is a great deal of backwardness in the performance of this duty. The cost of an additional officer and his necessary staff, and the throwing of an additional burden on the rates, is in the eyes of too many of these popularly-elected bodies a sufficient ground for the non-performance of their statutory duty. The remedy lies with the ratepayers, the working men, the people concerned. If they will only take the proper steps to secure men who are not only pledged in the matter, but on whom reliance can be placed that they will carry out their pledges, we should very soon see a very different state of affairs, and that co-operation between the local and the central authority which the right hon. Gentleman contemplated, made what it is not at present, an accomplished fact. For the time being we must leave matters as they are and trust to local authorities being aroused to a keener sense of the necessity of discharging this most important duty. With regard to overtime, I confess my own strong disposition, after careful study of the facts, was to prohibit overtime altogether, or try to do so. But I am perfectly satisfied that if I had I should not have procured the assent of the majority of the House to such a proposal. I went as far as I thought was practicable in prohibiting overtime for young persons, and in reducing the overtime now allowed in the season trades of women within limits which I am satisfied are sufficient to meet the requirements of the various trades. I know it is said by some persons of great weight, who profess to represent the views of women in this matter, that this is an illegitimate interference with female industry. My hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire, to whose speech the House has listened with great attention and interest at an earlier stage, I think gave a very good answer to that contention. I have not this year had any complaints from working women, complaining against this so-called infringement, and on the other and I have received from large and important organisations of women the strongest expressions of sympathy in this provision which limits overtime. I know it may be said that many organisations connected with the cotton trade are not really affected by this question because overtime cannot be allowed in their trade, but I attach the greatest importance to their evidence, that they have been working for years as protected persons, and that the limitations in the hours of labour of women engaged in the textile industry has not had the effect which is so often feared; on the contrary, women are much more largely employed in the textile trades than ever before, they are earning better wages, and enjoying better conditions of work and of life. Although I do not in the least disguise the fact that I should have been glad if possible to put a stop to overtime altogether, I trust the concession made, which is a compromise between the extreme views on the one side and the other, will be received with general acceptance; I am satisfied it will impose no substantial hardship on any class, while it will remove many grave and scandalous abuses which have been unearthed by the inspectors in many of these so-called season trades. A subsidiary point relates to the night work of boys. I shall listen with great attention to the deputation with which the hon. Member opposite threatened me, and with an open mind, but it will take a great deal to convince me that boys under 16 employed in the glass trade ought to work at night. [An hon. Member: "Not altogether at night."] I know; by night as well as by day. There may be instances so exceptional in their environment and conditions that this is a legitimate thing to do, but the cases must be few and far between where such contracts should be permissible. The only other point with which I desire to trouble the House is that which relates to the vexed question of laundries, and in regard to that I think I may fairly say that we have advanced a considerable distance in knowledge of the real position of affairs and the state of the public sentiment since 1891. We have instituted a very far-reaching inquiry, extending over the whole of the country, as to the condition of laundries, an inquiry which was carried on largely by lady inspectors. That inquiry has brought to light facts that were only suspected before, both with regard to defects of sanitation, danger from machinery, and risks from the excessive humidity of the atmosphere. In all of these particulars a state of things almost incompatible with civilisation, certainly with the whole spirit of our factory legislation, has been disclosed and proved. It cannot now be disputed that laundries generally should come under the Factory Act, and all that is now claimed is that certain classes of laundries should be treated exceptionally. There is an instruction upon the paper to exclude from the scope of the Bill laundries that are connected with reformatories, refuges, penetentiaries, and industrial homes. It has also been suggested that the conventual establishments should likewise be excluded. What is our position in regard to that matter? In the first place, I say that except where a laundry falls within the category of a domestic workshop that is carried on for the purposes of gain they should all be brought under the scope of the Factory Act. The difficulty about conventual laundries has, I think, been largely removed by the appointment of female inspectors. The nuns and others who carry on these institutions object, with perhaps good reason, to the intrusion of men into such places, but the inquiries that have been made in Ireland by one of the lady inspectors lead us to believe that the same objection will not be raised with regard to the inspection of these institutions by ladies. No objection will be raised to the provisions of the Bill with regard to the hours of labour in such laundries. Where machinery is used the same precautions should be required as in any other factories, and the hours of labour should not exceed the maximum period allowed under the Factory Act. I do not think that anyone can object to these conditions. If they are assented to I shall be prepared to meet objections on matters of detail. It may be necessary, in view of the peculiar character of some of these institutions and the somewhat disciplinary nature of their management, to apply to them a somewhat more elastic rule, and I shall be quite willing to add words to this clause to meet such cases. But we cannot concede that they are entitled without inspection to have machinery which is dangerous in its character or operation, or to employ persons for a larger number of hours than the Factory Act allows. I think that that is a reasonable arrangement that will be acceptable to the House, and that we ought to have no difficulty in coming to an agreement in regard to it. As to the case of laundries generally and overtime, I have to say that, in my opinion, the difficulties arising from a large pressure of work at particular seasons will yield to practical experience. If it is once made clear that those employed in laundries, like other factories, are only to work a certain number of hours and we are giving them a provision as to overtime, I believe that the habits of the householders of this country will very soon adapt themselves to the new state of the law. It is the same with regard to the dressmakers, the pressure of whose orders comes in certain seasons, which they can predict as well as an astronomer can predict an eclipse. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] I trust that the House will face the facts of the case as they really are, and will co-operate with the Government in bringing these industries effectively within the range of the law, and secure to those employed in laundries the protection which they require quite as much as any other class of the community. I trust that the House will allow me to leave the matter here, and I can assure hon. Members that we shall welcome any practical suggestions that may be made from any quarter of the House.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.) desired to say a few words on a clause in the Bill which, if it became law, would have a most disastrous effect on the iron manufacture of the country. At the present time iron manufacturers were in this difficulty—that they were unable to find sufficient employment for the men seeking it; therefore anything that would tend to increase the number of men to be employed should not be enacted unless a very strong case was made out for it. Section 58 of the Act of 1878 permitted the employment of boys of 14 and upwards at night. By this Bill it was proposed to alter that. If, however, boys were never to work at night, they would be unable to work at all, because in blast furnaces and Iron Works the work was continuous, and the men would consequently have to do all the night work. Therefore the prohibition for boys to work at night was a prohibition to work at all until they attained the age of 16. Boys of that class could complete their education by 14. What, then, was to become of them between that age and 16? The fact was that in an iron mill, unless a youth were to begin early, he could not become sufficiently dexterous, and if this clause should become law it would have a most disastrous effect not only on the trade, but on the workmen themselves, who, for the most part, were accustomed to bring up their sons to the same industry, and who viewed the present proposal with positive consternation. He had been beset with applications to use every effort to induce the Home Secretary to reconsider his decision, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would listen to the representations made to him, and that he would consent to receive a deputation on the subject.

Mr. W. ALLEN (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said, that he had put down an Instruction on the subject of licensing all places to which work is given out, and, if in order, he would move it; but if not he would in Committee move an Amendment to the effect that all places to which work is given out by or on behalf of the occupier, and every workshop or factory shall be licensed. This was the law in New Zealand, Massachusetts, and other places, and it seemed to him that, until some such system prevailed in this country also, they would be unable to prevent sweating altogether or to be sure that work was being done outside the factory under sanitary conditions. He did not, however, think that an Amendment of this kind should go too far, and he would not have it apply to any domestic workshop. Adverting to Section 30, the Home Secretary had stated that he had not heard any complaints as to the temperature of places where wearing apparel was made being too warm. In his opinion, however, there was a strong feeling that something should be done with regard to the *maximum* temperature of workshops. Amongst the tailors in London the feeling was far stronger in respect to *maximum* than *minimum* temperature. He quite admitted that this was a difficult matter to deal with on account of the variations of temperature outside, but he suggested that power should be given to the Home Secretary to say that the inside temperature should not exceed a certain ratio to the temperature outside. He hoped that the Government would devise some plan by which the inside temperature should be kept down below, say 70 deg. He thought that Section 28, dealing with factories and workshops where lead and other poisonous substances were used would, as far as it went, do a large amount of good; but he did not think that it went far enough. In his opinion, the owner of such a factory should be compelled to provide overalls or coverings for his workmen during the time that they were working with the poisonous material. If the Government would favourably consider any Amendment for lessening the number of cases of lead-poisoning, the benefits of this section would be considerably extended. In regard to the clause limiting overtime for women, he wished that the Home Secretary had been able to go a little farther, so as altogether to prohibit women from working overtime, and he thought that the Home Secretary would have had behind him the vast majority of the organised women workers. He recognised, however, that the right hon. Gentleman had taken a long step in the right direction, and he took it that the only reason why the right hon. Gentleman had not gone the whole length of prohibiting overtime was because he did not wish to introduce too much contentious matter into his Bill, and thus hinder it from becoming law during the present Session. As the Bill now stood it would, he believed, do a great deal of good; and if the Government would consent to Amendments for limiting the *maximum* temperature and providing for the inspection of all places where work was given out it would do still more good in ameliorating the condition of the workers in whose interests it had been framed.

*Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) congratulated the Home Secretary on having introduced a Bill which, so far as respected the textile industries, in which his constituents were chiefly concerned, neither workmen nor employers would take exception to on the Second Reading. He was glad to know that on the Amendments to be proposed thereafter on behalf of those engaged in textile manufactures, no antagonism would be shown between employers and employed; and he hoped that this would induce the Home Secretary to look with a favourable eye upon the Amendments which would be so brought forward. He was very glad that the Home Secretary had not introduced into the Bill any clause raising the age of half-timers, and he hoped the Government would maintain a neutral attitude on the subject. In the present depressed condition of the cotton trade and other textile industries, it would be very undesirable to disturb the existing conditions of labour in regard to half-timers, and he certainly thought the right hon. Gentleman had been wisely advised in not introducing this contentious question into the measure. It was the custom in the textile industries for the several members of a family to distribute themselves for work in different factories, the object being that if one factory ceased to work money might still come to the family from the workers in the other factories, and the chances of actual destitution coming upon them be greatly reduced. With respect to the selected number of cubic feet of air to be allowed to each person in a factory, he thought that with regard to the textile industries at least, there would be no difficulty in complying with the minimum amount of space required by the law. But he was bound to say that he agreed with the hon. Member for Leicestershire in disapproving of the provision which would enable the Home Secretary to extend, at his discretion, the minimum number of cubic feet of air required in a factory. As he understood the Bill, this power of extension was not to be limited to new factories, and if the amount of space per workman was liable to be varied in factories already built at the will purely of the Home Secretary, no man would know the conditions under which he could carry on his work. But he should object on principle to giving any Member of the Government so arbitrary a power as this, and he hoped the matter would be very carefully discussed and considered in Committee. He did not know how far the Government factories and workshops came within the limits of the Bill; or, if they were not included, how far it would be possible to include them by Amendments in Committee. Hon. Members were aware that this question of placing the Government establishments under inspection in the same way as private factories had often been referred to recently, and especially in relation to the disastrous explosions that had occurred at Waltham Abbey explosives factory, through which loss of life and serious injury had occurred. It was then strongly contended that the regulations for safe working in those establishments could not be enforced with the same stringency as they could be if they were under the Home Office inspectors. He also desired to press on the Government that they would never have the same care and attention paid to those details which concerned the health of the persons employed in Government factories and establishments until they placed them under those skilled and experienced inspectors who were appointed for the purpose of inspecting private factories. If they took the case of a Government establishment, the manager was under the obligation of satisfying not only the head of his Department, but also the Treasury. No Government Department had anything like a capital account, and could not be forced, as a private manufacturer could, to spend capital or close his works. He had been supplied with particulars as to the condition of different post offices. He would not give the names, but the first was one in which there was overcrowding, and the ventilation was artificial and insufficient

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Post office factories or ordinary post offices?

*MR. TOMLINSON said, the cases he referred to were those of ordinary post offices, and he used the argument to show the desirability of putting all these places under Government Inspectors. The unsanitary condition went on increasing for years, because of the increase of the business in the office, but nothing was done, although the Postmaster General knew that the accommodation was insanitary and insufficient, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer only allowed him a small amount each year for reconstructions and extensions. Another case he had was one where the temperature was too high. Another case into which he had made inquiries was one where, when there was overpressure of work and extra men were taken on, the office would certainly not meet the requirements of the Bill in cubical space. Until the Government did something to put Post Offices under the factory Inspectors, and under factory regulations, they would not have done all they ought to do for the comfort and health of the workmen they employed. With regard to the second part of the Instruction which he had placed on the paper and which he feared he should be unable to move, he pointed out that foreign goods might be made under conditions which would be prohibited in this country by the present Bill, and being produced more cheaply foreign workmen would be able to compete on an unequal footing with English goods. He took, as an illustration, Clause 25, which prohibited the use of lead or arsenic in certain manufactures, such as tinning or enamelling. They were coming to a time when the Government would have seriously to face the question of whether they were to allow the markets of this country to be flooded with articles of foreign manufacture, made under conditions prohibited in respect of British goods, which latter were thereby rendered liable to be driven out of the country altogether.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought the Bill was not limited in its effect to manufacturing centres, but affected many other districts, especially London. He was extremely glad that a measure had been introduced to do something to make labour in all these smaller places better regulated and more sanitary. He understood the Bill was to be referred to the Grand Committee, and he would, therefore, deal with several points which it raised at the present stage. He did not think the provision for 250 cubic feet of air space for workpeople was by any means too large, still he thought it was rather dangerous not to fix a minimum, and so throw upon the Secretary of State the enormous labour of considering special cases. He did not see why there should be a stereotyped law requiring that for all overtime there should be a larger amount of space; it would mean that in cases of extreme pressure it would be impossible to employ a large staff in an ordinary factory. There were other clauses which he thought were not sufficiently stringent. Clause 4, concerning dangerous machines, was one. Where the machine was dangerous, involving imminent danger to life, if the employer neglected its condition the only penalty seemed to be a fine not exceeding 40s. He did not think this was really sufficient. It was not a matter for a fine, but one that should receive some more serious punishment. No compensation was sufficient to do away with the consequences of an accident, and what they wanted was to prevent accidents, not to pay for them after they had arisen. Clause 5, on the other hand, was almost too wide. It covered nearly every trade, if a person was weak or not suitable for the particular work. Words should be introduced limiting the clause to ordinary cases of injury to health. With regard to Clause 6, he fully agreed that there should be a heavy penalty on any occupier of a factory where an *employé* was allowed to be, suffering from scarlet fever or small-pox. But *employés* sometimes came to infected places, and were affected with certain stages of these diseases, and did not say so, and thus endangered the health and life of many others. There should be a penalty on *employés* who came from infected places without reporting the fact. As to Clause 10, danger from outbreaks of fire could only be obviated by a systematic supply of fire escapes. With reference to the limitation of the overtime of adult women, seeing the voting power which was now being given to women, the Legislature ought not to go out of its way to limit the independent action of adult women with regard to their hours of work. No doubt in the case of young persons it was right and proper. The proposal was not made by the wish of the great bulk of women. [Sir C. Dilke: "Oh!"] The right hon. Baronet was not an authority on the subject, and he should not recognise him as such. The majority of adult women were quite competent to know what was best in their own interests. He was struck with the remarks of the hon. Member for Leicester, because during the recent bye-election there he said that as girls or women left his employment as compositors, their places would not be filled up, and no female compositors would be employed. If women desired the limitation proposed they would have clearly expressed that view, and they had not done so. The clause was inserted to meet the views of certain trades unions which desired to restrict female labour in certain cases. He was glad that laundries had been brought within the scope of the Bill. The changes proposed might involve hardship in individual cases, but, in the long run, he believed they would benefit workpeople in laundries, and ultimately the industry too. The limitations would not apply to laundries where the only persons employed were members of the same family. That was reasonable, but the clause should define what a family was, or it would he largely evaded. The Bill as it stood was drawn one-sidedly as to tenement factories. The owner should be liable as well as the occupier, because the owner was also, to a certain extent, the occupier. The Bill should provide that the owner should have notice, and have the power of seeing that what was required was attended to, and if the occupier neglected the obvious intentions of the owner, the occupier should be liable, and not the owner at all. It was not reasonable that the owner should be absolutely liable in every case, when his orders and directions might sometimes be set at defiance. He was glad that bakehouses were dealt with. Some bakehouses were carried on about as well as they could be, but in regard to many others legislation was, no doubt, required. He agreed that in future it would be wiser if bakehouses were less below ground and more above ground. Not only would the latter be a boon to the bakers, but they would be better for those who consumed the food dealt with in these places. The provision as to putting up a scale of wages was an excellent one. It was much wanted, and would be largely adopted. Nothing would prevent disputes more than a distinct understanding as to the computation of payments. It was needed as much in small as in large bakeries. He agreed with what had been said as to the importance of the workers being provided with clean, healthy, and suitable workshops. They tended not only to the benefit of the workers in their work, but re-acted in a remarkable manner in improved dwellings. He had done what he could to promote the better housing of the working classes, and he knew that good workshops acted on dwelling houses and good dwelling-houses on workshops, and nothing promoted the well-being of the masses of the people more than improved dwelling houses and work-places. He sincerely hoped the Bill would tend to reduce "sweating." But it should be remembered that the public were responsible as well as employers for the evils of sweating, for they preferred low-priced goods which could not possibly be fairly and honestly made at the prices at which they were sold. To try by legislation to secure health, comfort, fair wages, and morality for the masses of the people was the proper function of the State. He sometimes looked upon the interference of the State in social problems with suspicion and doubt, but in such matters as this it was right that the law should lay down distinct rules, and that the employer should do his duty by those under him. But there was also an obligation on the part of the *employé*. If he worked under the best advantage the output should be increased, or the cost of production would be. If workpeople were enabled to work under better conditions it was natural to expect that larger quantities of goods should be produced; and if the workpeople took that view and responded to the efforts made for them, then perhaps we need not be afraid of foreign competition, which, of course, became the more serious the more we increased the cost of production, especially if improved conditions of working did not prevail among our foreign competitors. If, however, we did not secure advantages as the result of the improvements we made, then the worst consequences must follow.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, he wished to call attention to one or two points which would not naturally be dealt with in Committee. He would, however, assure the Home Secretary that there were weighty complaints on the subject of maximum temperature, although the right hon. Gentleman said he had received no complaints except as to minimum temperature; but the Grand Committee would have its work cut out for it if it attempted to regulate the maximum temperature. There were great complaints of maximum temperature in the tailoring trade, which worked under insanitary conditions. As to sweating, Clause 5, as it stood, was thought by the trades chiefly concerned to give them very little protection, not to advance much beyond the present position, and to give the go by to the recommendations of the Labour Commission and the factory inspectors. The matter was one of great difficulty, and the House would be glad to hear from the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who had paid special attention to the subject, the reasons why the Bill did not go further. An Amendment which he proposed to submit would compel all employers to adopt the present practice of the best tailoring houses, which was to hold themselves responsible for the condition of all places where work was given out to be done. But he should be willing to withdraw that Amendment in favour of one to be moved by the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, if the House could be induced to make so great a change, and that was the registration and licensing of all places to which work was given out to be done. This was the law of New York, Massachusetts, and several of the great manufacturing States of the American Union, of most, if not of all, the Australian colonies, and of New Zealand, which framed its legislation with considerable care and boldness, and had devised a system well worthy of our attention. On the subject of overtime, the last speaker was against further interference with the work of women, but said that if women were in favour of it he would change his view—that he would be convinced by the opinions of the women themselves. There were other opinions which were well deserving of attention, and those were the opinions, all but unanimous, of the factory inspectors, who were impartial persons not paid by trade unions. There was no subject upon which they had expressed themselves more clearly and more strongly than that of women's overtime. It was impossible to state the opinions of women who were not organised in unions; you could collect them only by going from factory to factory and asking for them, as the factory inspectors had done. There were a little over 100,000 women who were organised in different trade unions—women's unions or mixed unions; and almost all these women were against overtime. He held in his hand the evidence as to the opinions of 98,540 women in organised unions against overtime. That was a strong case for acting courageously upon the opinions of the inspectors in favour of the complete abolition of women's overtime. To that opinion he should try to give effect in the Grand Committee. He admitted that some case might be made out for overtime in one or two trades of a very special nature. There was, no doubt, something to be said for it in trades that dealt with perishable articles. It was necessary that this evil should be stopped in the trades where it was injurious to health or was used as a means of evading inspection—a practice which obtained in many trades at present. The special processes of the dyeing trade, perhaps, justified exception [Mr. MUNDELLA: "And season trades"]. He could not agree with his right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) that the season trades should be subject to any exception. In the millinery trade in London, especially, the evils of the overtime were greater than in any other trade in the country; yet the millinery trade must be included in any exception extended to the season trades. The Particulars Clause was another matter of first-class importance. He agreed that it would be desirable to extend the provisions of this clause to those other trades which stood in need of it, but it would be better to achieve that object by a separate clause without mixing up the textile and non-textile trades together. But what he urged was that this Particulars Clause, as it stood, was not thoroughly satisfactory either to Lancashire or Yorkshire. The drafting of it might be made more effective, and the "symbols" portion of the clause might be much improved. There was one of the greatest evils connected with the factory system which, though outside the present Bill, he would mention, as he thought it might be dealt with. This was the system of "time-cribbing." The inspector could not be everywhere, and he could not hope to get a conviction against a manufacturer for "time-cribbing" unless the offence related to a period of at least five minutes. The practice was widely spread, and if a manufacturer confined himself to taking about two minutes and a half, instead of five, six times a day, he could appropriate an hour and 25 minutes in the week. This was a question not so much of the amendment of the law as of its more effective administration. Possibly it could be provided that the county police should co-operate with the inspectors in the enforcement of this part of the law, and with that view he made the suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, that, so far from agreeing with the view that the House had been wasting its time in discussing the details of this measure on the Second Reading, he thought that no hours of the present Session had been spent so usefully for the country. If some hon. Members had wandered into questions of detail, it was because the Home Secretary had announced his intention of referring the Bill to a Grand Committee, where these points of detail—of immense importance to the manufacturing constituencies—could not be adequately and publicly discussed. The hon. Member for Stockport, for instance, was opposed to the raising of the age at which children might be employed. He disagreed with the hon. Member; but such a question could not advantageously be settled without public discussion. The hon. Member for St. Helens, again, objected to the clause affecting the glass-workers. That might be discussed in Committee, if it were Committee of the whole House; but, seeing that the provisions of the Act of 1878 were settled after communication with the trade, it was impossible that the arrangement could be satisfactorily altered unless opportunity were given for the public statement of the views of both sides. He doubted whether any time would be saved by referring the Bill to a Grand Committee, as the most important points would have to be discussed again on Report, although he acquiesced in any course which the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill might think it best to adopt. The House must bear in mind that this Bill was both a factory and a workshops Bill, and he thought that the interest of the workshops suffered by being bound up with factory legislation. Of the two, factory legislation was much more easy. The factory legislation of the country had been a great success, because Parliament had followed the agreements and the conventions which had been thought out and argued out between the employers and the employed in the great factory industries of the country. It had been a kind of concordat to which legislative sanction had been given; both parties had agreed to the provisions embodied in the Bills, and they had intended fully and fairly to carry them out. Although inspectors were necessary to detect violations on the part of those who were not honest in keeping the law, yet, on the whole, the factory legislation of the country had been fairly observed, and the benefits to the condition of the workpeople and to the character of our industry in the eyes of the world were almost inestimable. But this was not the case with workshops. It was easy to pass a law with reference to workshops, but Parliament would be much mistaken if it thought by merely enacting those laws with reference to workshops it could produce in them anything like the same effects produced in factories. Take as an illustration the first clause of this Bill. It was against overcrowding. He had not the slightest doubt that that clause would, in the main, be operative in every great factory and establishment in the Kingdom; but did the Home Secretary hope anything like the same result would be obtained in workshops? In the first place, the operation of the law was not to be carried out by the inspectors of the Home Office, but by the inspectors of the Sanitary Authority, and only partially under the authority of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that in the carrying out of the powers of the provisions of the Factory and Workshops Act the local authorities had shown backwardness and lethargy in performing their statutory duties. Under the Act of 1891, there was in the first clause a special power reserved to the Home Secretary to act himself in the event of his having any reason to believe that the local authorities were backward and lethargic. But how could this first clause of the Bill be carried out by the local authority? Would overcrowding in workshops be stopped? He recited a little personal experience on this point which occurred a year ago. He was extremely anxious to get into a sweating den in the east-end of London, in order to see the overcrowding of tailors' workshops, but he was not able to do so. He obtained access to the building, but before he got into the room where the men were at work the bulk of them had fled in all directions. One of these backward sanitary inspectors told him that he found it to be the most difficult thing in the world to detect overcrowding. On one occasion the inspector said that he found a dog chained at the bottom of the stairs; and thus, before the inspector could enter the workroom, he had to call a man to look after the dog. The men who were at work were thereby enabled to go into other rooms of the tenement where the inspector had no right to enter, and he had therefore no chance of detecting overcrowding. Even in cases where workshop overcrowding was detected and notice was given for the enlargement of the room, it constantly happened that the little open spaces found existing between one street and another were built over by excrescences from the buildings, so that the free lung spaces of the neighbourhood were congested or destroyed. This was a matter which was under the careful consideration of the Royal Commission on Labour. That Commission did not make many suggestions, and as to those it did make it was very seldom unanimous. As to overcrowding and sweating, however, they were unanimous. In their Report they called attention to the extreme difficulty of carrying out the law when it is made, and they then recommended that all occupiers of workshops should be required, under penalties, to obtain a certificate from a competent public authority to the effect that the premises used by them were in all respects in a sufficiently sanitary condition and contained sufficient cubic space for the number of persons employed therein, such certificate to be withdrawn at any time if it were found that the conditions were no longer complied with. To his great surprise no place was found for such a provision in this Bill. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had called for far more stringent regulations than were recommended by the Royal Commission. The inclusion of the recommendation would, at all events, have afforded some better prospect of the excellent Clause 1, if passed into law, being not merely a dead letter, as so many of the admirable provisions relating to workshops were, but an actually living statute which would put an end, to some extent, to the overcrowding which notoriously prevailed in East-end workshops. Furthermore, he desired to ask why Government factories were not included in the Bill?

Mr. ASQUITH: They are. There is no ground for the suggestion that the Government factories are not included in the Bill, because they are included expressly in the Act of 1878. This Bill is to be read as one with the Act of 1878, therefore every provision in this Bill applies to Government factories as well as to other factories and workshops.

Sir J. GORST said, that was rather of a piece with what he had been saying about workshops. The law was applied to Government factories, but it was not enforced.

Mr. ASQUITH said, the law was enforced with the same rigidity in Government factories as in others.

Sir J. GORST said, that only to-night a communication had been made to him from a workman employed in the dockyard at Chatham, who, in 1893, had both hands amputated by a machine which had been already condemned as a dangerous machine when he was put to work on it; it was a machine on which no one would have been allowed to work in a private yard. The man was rewarded by the Government with the munificent daily pension of 1s. 4d., or 8d. for each hand he had lost. If the provisions of the Bill were to be really enforced in Government factories he was glad to hear it, and had nothing more to say. Certainly, to him, it would be a new thing, because he had had sufficient experience as the representative of a dockyard town to know that for years and years such laws, if applying to such places, had not been in force, and workmen in Government factories had not had the protection which workmen in private employment enjoyed. In conclusion, he congratulated the House and the Home Secretary upon the extremely useful discussion they had had. It had been dull, perhaps, but then, the proceedings of the House were always dull when the House was engaged in useful work; they were only lively when the House was wasting its time. If to-night the Debate had been dull, they had, he thought, done more practical and useful work for the country than any hitherto done this Session.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, there was no objection on the Government Benches, as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think, to this Motion being discussed on the Second Reading. It was quite obvious that when a Bill was to go to a Grand Committee a larger number of matters of detail must be discussed in the House on the Second Reading than when a Bill was to be taken in the ordinary way through Committee. Those interested in the promotion of the Bill had listened with great interest to the discussion and had been very much gratified to find that, while certain provisions had been criticised in a very friendly spirit, no hostility had been displayed to any particular clause. The Government felt that a Bill of this character ought not to be thrust down the throats of the House or of the Committee, and they were ready to listen with open minds and with an anxious desire to meet the general wishes of the House as regards the general provisions of the measure. Before he entered on the larger questions of principle he ought to answer one or two questions asked since the Home Secretary had spoken. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton raised the question of night-work. The right hon. Gentleman had already in anticipation answered that question, because he had expressed his willingness to receive a deputation and see what could be done if they made out their case. The hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme asked whether the maximum temperature could not be insisted on with regard to certain industries. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had pointed out that he had for hours tried to draw such a clause, but had not been able to draw one to his own satisfaction. If the hon. Gentleman could produce a clause which would stand the criticism of the Standing Committee they would no doubt be glad to adopt it. As to dangerous industries, his hon. Friend would admit there ought to be special rules for providing certain clothing and other matters which were for the protection of the workmen. Many of the dangers of those trades were provided for by the principal Act; and it was proposed by the Bill to extend the provisions of that Act, and to give power to the Home Office to carry out those provisions with greater rigidity. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) objected to the application of the statutory limitation in regard to overcrowding being dependent on the sweet will of the Home Secretary. But it was only in the case of special industries that the Home Secretary had this discretionary power, and the tendency of public opinion was that very large powers ought to be given to the Home Secretary to modify or alter the provisions of factory legislation in regard to special industries on his own initiative without having to come to the House of Commons for special powers. Government factories and workshops were, by Clause 93 of the principal Act, brought as completely under this legislation as any private establishments; and, if any hon. Member knew of cases in which inspection of Government factories or workshops had not been carried out, or in which individuals had suffered through this neglect, he hoped they would not hesitate to bring the matter before the Department concerned and press it to a proper conclusion. The hon. Member for Preston also wanted to know why post-offices were not included in the Bill. So far as post-offices were factories they were included. But in cases where the work done was mere distribution work, the post-offices could not properly come under the provisions of a Factory and Workshops Bill, though they might properly be included in the Shops Bill. The hon. Member for Islington (Mr. Bartley) was inconsistent in objecting to any restrictions being placed on woman's labour, while he warmly supported the proposal to extend factory legislation to laundries, an industry that employed a larger percentage of women than any other industry in the Kingdom. In regard to the question of overtime which had also been raised, he for his part would like to see overtime abolished altogether; and he thought that by this Bill they were taking a considerable step in that direction; but it should be remembered that there were many trades carried on largely by overtime, and it would be impossible to abolish overtime in such trades at one swoop without causing great confusion and dislocation of business. He admitted that in the past, Parliament in legislation of this kind dealt principally with what he might call the aristocracy of labour, while the lower walks of labour were comparatively neglected. The Bill, however, was by no means a final Bill, and was considered simply as a further step towards bringing the smaller industries under the operation of labour legislation, towards tracking the sweater, and towards diminishing the illegitimate competition caused by home workshops and small workshops, which tended to decrease wages and to lower the standard of the conditions under which labour could only be properly performed. It was said the proposed system of registration of workshops was not sufficient; and that no workshop should be allowed to be opened without a licence. He thought there was a great deal to be said for such a proposal. But, still, it must be admitted that this Bill, by bringing under the purview of the Home Office every workshop, whether new or old, was a great improvement on the Act of 1891, which required the registration of new workshops only. Under this Bill all workshops, old or new, domestic or otherwise, would be under a penalty to be registered, they would thus know where they were, and it would be the duty of the sanitary authority to inspect them and see that they were in a proper sanitary condition. The right hon. Gentleman opposite proposed, at any rate in the case of the ordinary workshops, that the system which had been lately introduced in some of their colonies should be carried out, and that no workshops should be opened without a certificate being granted implying that it had been inspected, and that it complied with all the necessary requirements. If such a system could be carried out he should like to see its adoption. But in comparing the East of London with their colonies they should remember that under their system of work there were an enormous number of these smaller workshops, and the difficulty of examining them and issuing certificates would be very great indeed. There were real difficulties in the way of such a proposal, one of which was that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Matthews) in 1891 reversed the policy under which workshops were under the Home Office, and placed them under the local sanitary authorities. He, for one, protested against that proposal at the time, but rightly or wrongly it was passed; and the result was, that one difficulty in regard to the question of certifying these workshops was that if they had any examination or certification it must be carried out under the auspices of the local authority, who must be the parties responsible for giving the certificate. But as had already been pointed out the local authorities throughout the country generally had shown themselves to be very lax in regard to the whole question of inspecting workshops, and if this additional burden were thrown upon them they might refuse to accept the liability and expense involved in the matter. The Government believed that by requiring the registration of workshops under a penalty they had taken the best step they could in this matter, but if it could be shown that a system of licences, such as that which had been suggested, could be introduced without the local authorities being called upon to take responsibility for it, it should receive favourable consideration. As regarded the question of workshops the Government had brought them, as they believed, under an efficient system of registration. They had endeavoured as far as they could, in the first two or three clauses of the Bill, without actually reversing the policy of 1891, which they believed to be a wrong one—by placing workshops again directly under the Home Office, to bring them under more direct supervision and inspection where the sanitary authorities neglected to do their duty. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Home Office had not done its duty in screwing up the local authorities to do their duty. He thought the right hon. Gentleman forgot that, under the provisions of the Act of 1891 it was difficult for the Home Office to move in these matters. For example, they had first to give notice to the local authority, they had then to give the local authority what was called a reasonable time to act in the matter, and the question always arose as to what was a reasonable time, and whether the local authority ought or ought not to carry out the duty. The Government were proposing, not only to screw up these requirements as to workshops, but they were giving the Home Office a larger power of interfering where the local authorities had neglected their duty. They had defined for the first time what was "a reasonable time." They considered that, after notice had been given, that reasonable time should not exceed one month. Having been given notice with regard to a matter of sanitation, or of danger to health if the local authority did not carry out the requirements of the Bill, the Home Office would force them to do it at their own expense. On the questions of overcrowding and temperature, and the provision of sanitary requirements for *employés* in all workshops, they had done a good deal to improve the condition of the workshops generally throughout the country. As to the question of home work and sweating, they believed they had taken a good step. The evasion of the law by *employés* taking work to their homes and executing it after their legal hours of work were over, would be prevented by prohibiting such overtime. They desired, as far as they could, to make an employer liable for the condition of the place where his work was done. But while they could not make an employer liable for the sanitary condition of all the places where work was sent, especially as he had no right of entry to another man's premises, they said that such employer ought not to lose his responsibility for the sanitary condition of the place where the work was given out; and in future, where he received notice that the work was going to an insanitary place, the employer would be prohibited from sending it there under a penalty. This provision applied to special industries and special districts. All those proposals with regard to home work were intended for the large towns and not the country districts, and for the more overcrowded parts of the large towns. London had been largely sacrificed in these matters to other parts of the country; and there seemed to be no reason why special provisions should not be made for the East End of London without injury to other parts of the country. The provision with regard to furnishing lists of out-workers would enable the sanitary authority and the Home Office inspectors to track out the small domestic workshops in a way never possible before, and though nobody would pretend that such a provision would abolish sweating, the Government believed that by prohibiting work being sent to the most insanitary places, it would raise the general level of the conditions of work throughout the whole of London. That was the most they could expect at the present moment. About half-time children the position of the Government was a very clear one. They were in favour of raising the age. It was perfectly evident, however, from the Debate that if they had inserted such a provision in the Bill they would have encountered a great deal of hostility and difficulty in getting the Bill referred to Grand Committee. The Government did not wish to jeopardise the Bill, but thay were in the hands of the House. If a proposition was made to raise the age from 11 to 12, and it met the general assent of the House, they should not oppose it. There was no finality in these matters. He looked upon the Bill as marking a considerable step forward in improving the conditions of the working classes throughout the whole country, and he hoped the level would continue to rise. It was with these views and on that principle that he was thankful to have had an opportunity of being associated, in however humble a way, with a Bill having such a beneficent character.

Mr. W. WHITELAW (Perth) referred to the provisions of the Bill in further limiting overtime, especially as they affected the dyeing trade. This, he said, was infinitely more a workers' than an employers' question, and, so far as he was able to gather, with one or two little exceptions easily accounted for, the workers in the dyeing trade were unanimously in favour of the present law being allowed to remain as it is. Dyeing was a trade which was, perhaps above all others, a season one, and it was not exaggerating to say that this trade varied according to the time of the year to the extent of at least 100 per cent. The volume of trade in April and May was double what it was in December and January. For these reasons overtime was absolutely essential if the work was to be overtaken. They had been told that this point could be met by the public learning to send their goods to the works at a different time of year. His answer to that was this, that, so far as the factory workers were concerned, they had never yet seen anything to lead them to believe that the public would consult the interests of the dye-workers before they consulted their own convenience, and it was utopian to expect that the Bill would have the effect of making work more regular over the whole year. The result would be to stop all overtime, not only as regarded young persons, but older persons as well, inasmuch as the work of one depended very much on the work of others. Dyeing was not unhealthy work; it was work of the simplest and healthiest kind. The work at the great dyeworks was not carried on in a damp atmosphere nor under insanitary conditions; and in fact the young girls employed in them were generally very healthy—more so, indeed, than women who were over 18 years of age. It had been ascertained that if the hands worked overtime for two consecutive days there was an increase in the sick list, but that if they worked overtime every other day there was no appreciable effect upon their health. When he was engaged in collecting the opinions of the workers in dyeworks, upon the subject of overtime, he ascertained that they were in favour of overtime being allowed provided it were restricted to alternate days. It was perfectly true that it was possible in some places to overtake an accumulation of work by employing extra hands; but that was not the case in London, where it was impossible from want of space to provide the extra machinery required for emergencies; and in the Metropolis, therefore, the practice of the employment of extra hands had been given up as being unsatisfactory. The result was, that the great mass of the workers had to be dismissed at the beginning of the winter, when they most required employment. It was most undesirable for all parties concerned, as well as for the community at large, that a large number of hands should be thrown out of work at any particular period of the year. He wished to put it very strongly to the House that overtime in the great dyeworks, such as those at Perth, did not involve any great amount of extra work, while to allow the work to accumulate to any large extent would throw the whole organisation of the works out of gear. Under the present law work did not accumulate to any great extent, because it could always be overtaken by a small amount of overtime. The House might ask whether there was real overwork when there was overtime. He could lay before them some figures relating to this point that were of a startling character, because they showed that the average number of hours per week during which the hands were engaged including overtime only amounted to 48—that was to say, to eight hours a day. Therefore, it could not be said that the dye hands were being overworked. With regard to the laundries, he was glad to hear that they were to be brought within the provisions of the Factory Act, because the hours during which the hands were employed in them were dreadfully long, while the conditions of the work were insanitary, and because the laundries were doing work which was not really laundry work at all, but was cleaning and dyeing. The Home Secretary, referring to season trades, had expressed the opinion that the difficulty which they presented could be overcome by spreading the work. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the ladies in the West End who required a great many new clothes at the time of the Eton and Harrow Match, and when Drawing Rooms were held, and suggested that dressmakers could easily foresee this pressure of work. But the right hon. Gentleman did not explain how this pressure of work could be overtaken. A greatly increased number of hands could not be engaged, because the premises where the work had to be done were not elastic, and to overcrowd them would be to break the law. Did the right hon. Gentleman contemplate the possibility of ladies going to Drawing Rooms in ready-made dresses? He did not himself see how dressmakers could provide against the rush of orders during the season, and he did not think that ladies were likely to order dresses many months before they were wanted. When the right hon. Gentleman told them that this season difficulty could be got over by a re-arrangement of work he ought to show them how it could be done. He trusted that some member of the Grand Committee would take care that the question of the season trades should be fully discussed in that Committee. If the question was not raised there, he should again call attention to it when the Bill returned to the House.

MR. D. RANDELL (Glamorgan, Gower) supported the Bill, but hoped that the tin-plate trade would be exempted from the operation of Sub-section 3 of Clause 13 of the Bill. Boys were largely employed in this trade; their work was of a light character, and their earnings were a needful supplement to the diminished wages of their fathers. Both the manufacturers and the operatives desired this exemption, for the trade was in a most critical condition, and it was feared that this clause would have the effect of injuring it seriously.

MR. HENRY MATTHEWS: With reference to what the Under Secretary for the Colonies had said as to his past and present opinion on the policy of intrusting the sanitary inspection of workshops to the local authorities—asked the House to remember what in the state of the law was 1891. In respect of all important sanitary conditions the workshop was under the local authorities. But the subjects of whitewashing and ventilation were intrusted to the inspector of factories, who was a superintendent of labour and not a sanitary engineer. In that absurd way the duty of supervising the sanitary conditions of workshops was divided between two authorities. The Under Secretary for the Colonies expressed continued disagreement with him; but the hon. Gentleman totally misrepresented the effect of the 1st Section of the Act of 1891. It was devised as a tremendous weapon to be held over the heads of local authorities to compel them to do their duty. He fully expected that some local authorities would be remiss in their superintendence of workshops. But what did that show? Merely that the legislation of 1891 was in advance of public opinion, that the country lagged behind what Parliament was doing, and that local authorities were not prepared to levy a rate of a farthing in the pound in order to carry out the provisions of the Act. He foresaw that a little stimulus would be necessary. The 1st Clause of the Act of 1891 gave the Secretary of State absolute power; there was no occasion for him to give notice to the sanitary authority or to take their opinion; if he were of opinion that the provisions as to nuisances and limewashing and so on, were not being observed, he might on the instant direct an inspector to go down with power to do the work instead of the local authority. He had never contemplated that that power would be extensively used, and he brought no charge against anyone that it had not been; but he did contemplate that an example would be made of one or two special offenders, such as he had in his mind at the time—cases which, if he had continued to be responsible, he should have taken out of the hands of the local authorities. He believed that one or two examples of the kind would have stimulated the local authorities throughout the country to do their duty. With regard to overcrowding the Home Secretary truly said that the minimum of 250 ft. was a rule of thumb; but that rule went on to say that three lights were equal to one person and that so many cubic feet of space were necessary for each light; and, if one part of the rule of thumb were embodied, it would have been better to have embodied the whole, or else to have left it to the discretion of the inspectors to deal with each case on its merits. As to overtime he supposed that all members desired as far as possible to abolish it, and, if only you could secure regular full time employment in all industries, no overtime would be necessary, except in very special cases. In their zeal to get rid of an evil they were too apt to lose sight of the interests of the working people who were not in regular full employment, and who could only make a miserable livelihood by working overtime occasionally. The Bill prohibited overtime for all young persons. The Act of 1878 allowed three classes of exemptions under Section 53—cases of liability of goods to injury from weather, cases of season trades, and cases in which there was pressure from unforeseen events; and in these three classes of cases young persons were allowed to work overtime. These exceptions to a general rule were made in pursuance of the recommendations of the Commission of 1876, which made elaborate inquiries into the necessities of all the trades concerned. On this occasion, if there had been such inquiry, they had not heard of it. In the Act of 1878 the trades were mentioned in a schedule; they were mainly trades in which young persons were largely employed; and they included trading in Christmas presents, envelope-making, the making of playing cards and of artificial flowers, and Turkey-red dyeing. He knew of no evils arising in regard to the health of young women employed in trades of the character which he had been referring to, and which were mentioned in the schedule to the former Act. Overtime in such trades was a convenience so great, and was, moreover, an advantage so great to the young women themselves, that, unless very great evils were most clearly proved as resulting from such overtime work, Parliament ought to hesitate before it interfered to prohibit it. In these trades there were many slack times; then would come a sudden press of work, owing, perhaps, to unforeseen circumstances; and this Bill proposed to prevent the young women employed in these trades from enjoying overtime pay during the season while the orders lasted. He was not satisfied that this was either wise or humane legislation. He was not sure that, in pursuing an ideal of regular work without overtime, they would not be doing an evil to these young women, for which there would be no compensation whatever. He thought that, only on the ground of some great social mischief being proved to arise from overtime work, ought Parliament to deprive women of the advantages of overtime work. The Home Secretary had mentioned no such mischief, and none could be found in the inspectors' reports or elsewhere. Then again, in regard to laundries, he wished to state that he held the same opinions as formerly. To apply the provisions of the Factory Acts *en bloc* to laundries would be wrong on two grounds. He did not at all object to the application of provisions requiring that dangerous machinery should be fenced; but he did object to the application of factory hours regulations to the business of a laundry. A factory implied a business which was continuous, and which went on throughout the day, and from day to day, beginning at a certain hour, and with regular half-holidays. All those conditions failed in the case of a laundry. There the supply of work was intermittent; it was irregular; the operations to be performed must follow each other; the washers must end their work before the ironers could begin. Thousands of poor women took to laundry work as an assistance and makeweight in carrying on their households. The report of the inspectors was full of representations on that point. Those women could not go to work earlier than about Ten o'clock, because they had the business of their houses to attend to beforehand. They could not go to work at Six or Seven o'clock in the morning like a factory hand. In the smaller villages and towns especially, thousands of poor women eked out their existence by the help of laundry work, and they would be entirely deprived of this means of livelihood by the present proposals of the Government. What justification was there for this? He had omitted to mention the suddenness of the demand for washing in many cases. A ship arrived in port; the passengers wanted their linen washed in a day or two. A traveller arrived at an hotel; he wanted his linen washed before his departure. A public dinner sometimes took place in a village hotel, and all the clean linen was exhausted to supply the feast, and it must be washed in the next day or two. One of the female inspectors had suggested that to meet such cases a double stock of linen should be obtained, but that was an absurd proposition. The Home Secretary had said that he knew no law of nature which compelled the washing of clothes on a particular day. He agreed that there was no such law of nature, but he thought there was almost a divine law which compelled Englishmen to wear a clean shirt on Sundays, and to obtain it he must send the shirt to the wash before Thursday. It might be said that these were small matters, but he did not think so; for the Bill sought to alter the habits which convenience had created for a whole people. What evils had been shown which required that this general convenience of the people in these matters should be disregarded, and that the country should be taught by this sort of Draconian legislation to change their habits and practice in these things? In the Home Office paper before him, two lady inspectors set out 73 cases, which were, of course, the worst they could find. The hon. Member for Berwick, with much adroitness, had picked out from those 73 cases the only really bad one, in which the number of hours worked was 85. He had looked into the case and found that it affected two ironers and one washer, and yet that was the only foundation upon which the hon. Member based this legislation, for he cited no other case. He had looked through the other cases, and found that there were only three others in which the number of hours worked during the week was above 66. That, he contended, was a very slender basis upon which to build legislation of this kind, and he could only say that he hoped the Home Secretary had better ground than this for the introduction of the clause in question. He felt bound to say a word in reference to convent laundries, a considerable number of which would come under this Bill. They were kept going by ladies whose lives were devoted to works of the noblest charity, and who eked out their want of fortune by the small assistance which they could derive from these laundries. He would take, for instance, the Order of the Good Shepherd, the members of which devoted their efforts to the reformation of fallen women. The ladies of these institutions viewed the intrusion by the Government Inspector with feelings of pain and almost horror, and he thought they certainly ought not to be subjected to such treatment unless some strong case was made out. But what case had been made out? Again, when he referred to the Home Office Report, he found nothing whatever in it in condemnation of the convent laundries. In no case was it stated that the factory hours were exceeded, and he knew this from his own experience. In none of them, moreover, was there any night labour. To apply the Factory Act to such institutions as that of the Order of the Good Shepherd—to require, for instance, that on certain days holidays should be given to the inmates, whether they deserved them or not—would, it seemed to him, be a wanton interference with the work of charity. He strongly protested against this interference with the legitimate authority which the ladies at the head of those institutions exercised. He quite agreed with the Under Secretary for the Colonies that we ought not to regard this as a final measure. He contended that in these matters, which touched so many interests at so many points, it was much better to move slowly and step by step. He would earnestly press upon the Home Secretary the importance of this Bill passing through a Committee of the House instead of a Committee upstairs. They had had a very useful and valuable discussion during the evening, and there was hardly a clause in the Bill on which light had not been thrown. The criticism, whether successful or not, had shown unexpected effects arising out of the clauses of the Bill, which had been suggested by the constituents of different Members who had spoken, but the benefit of this sort of discussion would be entirely lost if it took place before a Grand Committee. The hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had asked how they were to tell what was the opinion of women who were not organised. He would point out that these women could contrive to communicate with the Members representing their constituencies, and if the discussion took place in a Committee of the House, in that way they would get to know what was felt about these provisions. This Bill was of far greater interest and importance than any other Bill which had been proposed this Session, and the Government, he thought, would really be doing well if they devoted some of the time of the whole House to its discussion. A Grand Committee was a very convenient tribunal for settling technical clauses in a Bill, but in a Bill of this kind, whatever care the Home Secretary had given to its preparation, there was no clause which might not touch some point of vital interest to the country; and how were those interests to be warned unless there was a public discussion in the House, which would be reported in the Press, and would so attract attention? He believed the Committee on Trade was that which the Home Secretary was going to select. He himself was not a member of that Committee, although he took a lively interest in every clause of the Bill, and should be happy to assist the Government in regard to the measure.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Mid Lanark) said, that Members could be added to the Committee, and undoubtedly the right hon. Gentleman would be put on.

*MR. MATTHEWS said, it was impossible that all Members interested should be put on that Committee, whereas, if the Bill was considered in the whole House they would have the benefit of the information of every Member.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) said, he had been requested by several laundries in his constituency to do what he could to prevent their inclusion in this Bill. The principal reason urged was the limitation of the time of the hours of work. It was of vital importance to poor widows and other women, who found laundry work their best means of livelihood, that this clause should be modified. With regard to convents, no people in this country did more good than the ladies in convents, and why should convents where laundry work was done be brought under the Factory Acts? These matters would be overlooked in Committee unless the Home Secretary took them up.

Bill read 2°.

MR. ASQUITH moved :—"That the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade." The right hon. Member for East Birminham had suggested that instead of the Bill being referred to a Standing Committee, it should be referred to a Committee of the whole House. But the Government had the advantage in the present instance of the right hon. Gentleman's own authority, for in 1891, when an important measure for which he was responsible, and which was now part of the Statute Law, was under discussion, it was referred by the general consent of the House to the same tribunal to which he proposed to refer this Bill. He did not see why there should be any difference in the procedure. The Committee on Trade was the fittest tribunal to deal with the Bill. The House retained complete control over the proceedings of the Committee, and at the Report stage any changes made in Committee could be fully revised.

MR. TOMLINSON suggested that no time would be gained by referring the Bill to the Committee on Trade. He could not help thinking that it would be far better to submit the Bill to a Committee of the whole House, and certainly the time of the House would be better occupied in discussing this Bill than in discussing some others that were before it.

MR. SETON-KARR did not think that the House was in any way bound by anything that might have been said by the Home Secretary in a previous Administration. What those who represented constituencies which were largely interested in this Bill desired was—that the mass of detail contained in it should be discussed in Committee of the whole House. He did not wish to disparage the work of the Standing Committee. Of that body he knew absolutely nothing, but he did not think that the large majority of Members of the House were not members of it, while on the other hand the large majority of Members were interested in the Bill. He thought this was pre-eminently a Bill that required consideration in the whole House. No doubt an interesting discussion would take place upstairs, and probably at a late period of the Session the Bill would be brought back in the Report stage, and if hon. Members desired to bring forward important Amendments then they would be told that they had all been discussed by the Committee upstairs. The majority of Members would not have been there, and so would have been unable to bring forward the arguments they desired to bring forward on behalf of the trades in which they were interested. That seemed to him a most unsatisfactory state of things, and he thought that if they were to have a fair discussion it ought to take place within the walls of the Chamber itself. He therefore moved that the Bill be referred to a Committee of the whole House.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is exactly the process which will take place if this Motion is not carried. It will follow on the Standing Orders.

MR. SETON-KARR: Whatever is the correct thing, Sir, I desire to do.

The House divided:—Ayes, 67; Noes, 27.—(Division List No. 44.)

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

### CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND).

On the Order for the Adjourned Debate on the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked whether the Bill would be taken as first Order on Thursday.

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. THOMAS ELLIS): Yes, Sir.

### COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON, asked that the Order for the Second Reading of this Bill should not be put down for this week.

MR. ASQUITH agreed to postpone it till Monday next.

## *MOTIONS.*

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### BURGH LAND TAX (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of the Lord Advocate, Bill to regulate the Collection of the Land Tax allocated by the Convention of Royal Burghs in Scotland.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 209.]

### RELIEF OF CHITRAL.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House,

MR. ASQUITH said,—It may be of interest to the House to know that the Secretary of State for India has received a telegram from the Viceroy to say that the news of the relief of Chitral is confirmed. [*Cheers.*]

House adjourned at Ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Tuesday, 23rd April 1895.*

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The House met at Three of the clock.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### OCEAN DERELICTS.

Mr. J. C. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is in a position to inform the House whether the derelict, that he stated on 9th April instant was floating in the Mediterranean near to Gibraltar, is a waterlogged ship or only wreckage matter; and what steps he proposes taking to remove so dangerous an obstruction to the movements of Her Majesty's Fleet?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): No further report respecting this derelict has been received at the Admiralty.

Mr. J. C. MACDONA: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Cunard steamship *Umbria*, sighted at 1 p.m. on Saturday last, 25 miles west of the Fastnet, the British full-rigged ship *Arno*, that as a derelict was boarded a short time since by a prize crew, flying distress signals, whilst heading west-south-west, the wind being south by east, Captain Dutton of the *Umbria* having stated he believed that the officer in charge of the *Arno* had no charts available, or seemingly did not know the coast which he was so near; and whether, under these circumstances, the Board of Trade will advise the Trinity Board to send out to look after her either their own vessel or charter the Liverpool Tug Company, who lately brought the *Loch Maree* derelict so successfully from off the coast of Ireland to Belfast Harbour?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The crew put on board the *Arno* by the *Merrimac* on April 4th, consisted of the Chief Officer and ten men of the crew of the latter vessel, and the *Arno* was then in thoroughly seaworthy condition. A notice has since been received from the owners of the cargo that she is now on her way to this country. It is not certain that the vessel seen by the *Umbria* was really the *Arno*, as the signal letters of that vessel are M.W.S.D. not W.M.C.D., as reported by the *Umbria*, nor is it clear on what grounds the Captain of the latter vessel based his opinion as to the absence of charts. I see no occasion for communicating with the Trinity Board.

### QUEEN LILIOKUOLANI.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Queen Liliokuolani is imprisoned in a barracks at Honolulu, in which a number of semi-savage soldiers are also quartered; whether anyone is responsible for her safety; and if so, who is; and whether Her Majesty's Government will make representations to the Government of Hawaii in order to secure better treatment for the Queen?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): We have no further news as to the Queen's imprisonment, and the matter is not one in which Her Majesty's Government could interfere.

### BRITISH INDIA.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he would explain to the House what are the formal steps by which territory lying beyond the external frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions becomes legally incorporated within the limits of British India and vested in Her Majesty according to the provisions of Section 1 of the Act for the Better Government of India, 1858?

*Sir E. GREY (replying in the absence of Mr. Henry Fowler): The Secretary of State is not aware that there are any formal steps prescribed by law for the purpose to which the hon. Baronet's question refers.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, as there are no official

at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

maps of British India with reference to Section 55 of 21 and 22 Vict. c. 106, he will give a list of all official maps of the whole of British India published for any purpose between the years 1853 and 1895?

*SIR E. GREY: If by official maps the hon. Baronet means maps published by the Government of India, a list of them (which, however, does not go further back than 1862) is accessible to the public in the Record Department of the India Office; and the Secretary of State does not think that any useful purpose would be served by giving a return on the subject.

### POPPY CULTIVATION IN BEHAR AND BENARES.

MR. ALFRED WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the number of acres under poppy cultivation in the Behar and Benares Agencies respectively for each of the last four years and for the present year?

*SIR E. GREY: The acreage under poppy cultivation in each Agency for the last four years has been:—

| | Behar. | Benares. |
|---|---|---|
| 1890-91 | 254,975 Acres | 246,742 Acres |
| 1891-92 | 234,975 ,, | 226,922 ,, |
| 1892-93 | 241,100 ,, | 212,517 ,, |
| 1893-94 | 237,341 ,, | 220,881 ,, |

No report has yet been received of the area actually under poppy cultivation during 1894-95.

### MADAGASCAR.

MR. J. C. MACDONA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware that Englishmen, who, whilst endeavouring to pass the French outposts at Tamatave, in Madagascar, have been arrested and placed in close confinement, and were eventually put on board a vessel half-naked, and, according to reports, in irons; and, whether he will inquire into this case and take steps immediately to prevent any repetition of such treatment of British subjects?

SIR E. GREY: It appears from a report from the Acting British Consul at Tamatave that one Englishman with an American friend was arrested on the 4th of March while trying to cross the French lines. On being questioned by the Acting Consul, he said that he and his friend were not sober when arrested. The French Commandant told the Acting Consul that he would liberate the prisoner if the Acting Consul would send him out of the country. The man, who was destitute and had no chance of finding work in Tamatave, was accordingly sent to Mauritius on the 8th of March, and his passage paid by the Acting Consul. It is not stated that there was any ill-treatment.

### EVICTIONS IN THE CROFTING COUNTIES.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the fact that Charles Forbes Hodson Shaw Mackenzie, of Newhall House, Ross-shire, has obtained a warrant from the Sheriff of Ross and Cromarty for the eviction of Donald McIver, a crofter on Mr. Mackenzie's estate at Ferrytown, Balblair; that Donald McIver was a tenant holding under a lease which expired in 1890, and since that time has been a yearly tenant at a rental of £4 4s.; and that no arrears of rent are due; and whether any steps can be taken to prevent this and similar evictions in the crofting counties, pending the passing into law of the Crofters' Act Amendment Bill, which has for its object the protection of small tenants holding under lease, and who held under lease at the passing of the Crofters' Act?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I understand that Donald McIver's father, Roderick McIver, held the croft at Ferrytown, Balblair, from 1871, or earlier, till 1882, when he died; that Donald McIver took up the holding in 1884 on his return from America, and occupied it under a lease which expired in 1890, since which time he has neither renewed it nor paid his rent, and is now three years in arrear, in consequence of which legal proceedings have been taken. I do not contemplate taking any steps of the nature referred to by the hon. Member pending the passing of the Crofters' Act (1886) Amendment Bill.

### RURAL POSTMEN IN SCOTLAND.

CAPTAIN HOPE (Linlithgow): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether it is the case that rural postmen in Scotland, having in some instances to walk over 20 miles a day, receive, after 20 years' service, no more than 15s. a week; and whether, if this be the case, he will consider the possibility of giving to this class of public servants such a salary as will better enable them to maintain themselves and their families?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Arnold Morley, Nottingham, E.): It is certainly opposed to the ordinary practice of the Department that any postman should be required to walk 20 miles a day, and no officer after 20 years' established service would be in receipt of only 15s. a week. I doubt, therefore, whether there can be such a case as that to which the hon. Member alludes. If, however, he will let me know the particulars of it I will have inquiry made, with a view to the amendment of the conditions of the postman's employment, if necessary.

## POST OFFICES IN WELSH-SPEAKING DISTRICTS.

Mr. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, in recent appointments to post offices in Welsh-speaking districts, he has followed the promise given by his predecessor in 1886 of giving, when practicable, a preference to candidates having a knowledge of the Welsh language; and, if not, whether he will do so in future appointments?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: In appointing to post offices in Welsh-speaking districts it is my invariable practice to inquire which of the candidates possess a knowledge of the Welsh language, and to these a preference is given. This practice I propose to continue.

## SIAM.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the statement telegraphed from Rangoon to the effect that 200 men of the 1st Burmah Rifles have left Mandalay to garrison Keng Kong; whether Keng Kong is outside any British territory or British protectorate; and whether there is any foundation for the statement thus telegraphed?

*Sir E. GREY: Keng Kong is not in British territory, but is the place where it was stated a short time ago that a French post was established. There is no intention whatever to send British troops there.

## VOLUNTEER CAMP CANTEENS.

Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in the case of a regimental canteen being established in a Volunteer camp, under the sanction of the General Officer commanding, pursuant to the provisions of the circular memorandum recently issued from the Adjutant General's Office, any person not a member of the corps to which the canteen belongs surreptitiously obtaining, or endeavouring to obtain, drink at such canteen, commits an offence for which he is punishable at law; what remedies are open to the Commanding Officer against the person so offending; and, is he entitled to put him under arrest, or can he take out a summons against him before the local magistrates?

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): This is a purely hypothetical question, which is hardly one for me to answer. I would suggest that the hon. Member should address himself to the Attorney General on the subject.

## TRALEE AND DINGLE RAILWAY.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in view of the refusal of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to take over the Tralee and Dingle Railway, he will state what steps taken by the County Kerry Grand Jury for the future management of the line will be considered satisfactory by the Treasury?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): I would refer my hon. Friend to the last paragraph of the letter addressed to him by the Treasury on the 20th February 1894, which runs as follows:—

> "It further appears to my Lords that some improvement in the management of the line is called for, and it is matter for consideration whether this should not be insisted on before any expenditure is incurred on works; and my Lords would suggest to the Grand Jury that negotiations should be opened with the object of

endeavouring to induce some responsible railway company serving neighbouring districts to enter into an agreement for working the line, or, failing that, to allow their General Manager or other experienced officer to undertake the management of it upon suitable terms. Such an arrangement would, in the opinion of my Lords, give the best guarantee that the line would be safely and economically worked for the future."

### ILLEGAL TRAWLING ON THE SCOTCH COAST.

**MR. J. W. CROMBIE** (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he is aware that the movements of H.M.S *Jackal*, which is at present engaged in sea-police service off the Scotch coast, are frequently announced in advance by the local newspapers, thereby greatly detracting from her efficiency in preventing illegal trawling; and, whether he will take steps to prevent this recurring?

**MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON**: The Admiralty have no information on this point. The *Jackal* is at the disposal of the Scotch Fishery Board, and her movements are settled by that Board.

### COMMISSIONAIRES AT THE POST OFFICE.

**MAJOR RASCH** (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether Commissionaires are employed at the Central Telegraph Office on night duty, from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m., after parading from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.; whether night duty for civilians is seven hours; whether the pay received for 84 hours weekly is 26s. 6d., or under 4d. per hour; and whether he will extend to these old soldiers the same hours granted to civilians and a minimum wage of 6d. per hour?

**MR. ARNOLD MORLEY**: The hours of work and the pay of the Commissionaires employed by the Post Office were arranged some years ago, after consultation with the Officers of the Corps; but I shall be very glad to look into the matter with the view of ascertaining whether present circumstances would justify any amelioration of the conditions under which their duties are performed at night. I may add that, though it may be the fact that the men are on duty for 12 hours, there is usually an interval when the work falls off considerably, which admits of their obtaining some two hours' rest.

*Sir John Hibbert.*

### "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

**MR. S. WOODS** (Lancashire, Ince): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that Messrs. Waterlow and Sons Limited, Printers of the Parliamentary Reports, are employing, in connection with this department, boys and young men up to the age of 18 years, and paying wages only at the rate of 10s. per week; that such boys and young men are working as much as two days and a night at a time without any rest, and that for the night work of 13 hours they are only paid 3½d. per hour; whether the firm, in the printing of the Debates are paying the Trade Union rate of wages to the machine labourers employed upon the Government work; is he aware that these conditions of work and rates of wages are strongly objected to by the Printers' Labourers' Union, which Union is recognised by the Employers' Printers' Association; and whether, with a view of giving satisfaction, he will cause an investigation to be made as to the accuracy of these statements.

**SIR JOHN HIBBERT**: My hon. Friend's question has been referred to Messrs. Waterlow, whose reply is as follows:—

> "The printing of 'The Parliamentary Debates' is done by Printers who are paid the Union rate of wages, assisted, as is customary throughout the entire trade, by boys, who do the laying-on only, at the rate of 10s. to 16s. per week. Men are not employed laying-on on these machines, they being too small to require adult labour. With regard to the statement that they worked 'two days and a night without rest,' this is untrue; and, indeed, the Factory Inspector takes care that the boys do not work after seven o'clock, except by special permission, and then only 48 times in one year."

I may add that, if my hon. Friend is not satisfied that the reply of Messrs. Waterlow is in accordance with the spirit of the Resolution of the House in regard to Government work, I will be glad to make further inquiries.

### TRAINING SHIP FOR QUEENSTOWN.

**CAPTAIN DONELAN** (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether the training ship for Queenstown has yet been selected; and, when she may be expected there?

**MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON**: The training ship for Queenstown has not yet been decided upon, and the final details are still under consideration.

Captain DONELAN: Can the hon. Gentleman say what is the cause of the delay in making the selection?

Mr. ROBERTSON: The delay has arisen in considering the details of the matter.

### THE OPIUM COMMISSION REPORT.

*Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can explain how *The Times* has been able to obtain information as to the Report of the Royal Commission on Opium before the Report is presented to Parliament?

*Sir E. GREY: The Secretary of State has no information on the subject of my hon. Friend's question.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS: Will the Secretary of State take some steps to obtain information about it?

*Sir E. GREY: I cannot make any promise on behalf of the Secretary of State for India without notice.

### THE IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether any arrangement has yet been arrived at with the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company for the acceleration of the Irish Mail Service?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: As I stated before the Recess, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company promised to send me certain data on which their estimate had been prepared. I have received these data during the last few days, and they are now receiving careful consideration.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say when it is expected a decision will be come to in this matter?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: I cannot say more than I have already stated, that there will be no unnecessary delay in the matter.

Captain DONELAN: In view of the apparent impossibility of arriving at a decision with the Steam Packet Company, could not the right hon. Gentleman refer the matter to arbitration?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: No, Sir. I am afraid that would be an unusual course. It is impossible for the Government to refer a matter of this kind to arbitration.

### THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Commander-in-Chief is about to resign; and, if so, whether the Government intend to carry out the recommendations of the Hartington Commission?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no knowledge of any foundation for the rumour referred to. As to the course to be followed on the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Commander-in-Chief, I can only repeat what I said in this House on the 11th September 1893, that, after the recommendation made by the Royal Commission on this subject,—

> "I cannot conceive that any appointment of a permanent nature to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Army can henceforth be made."

### MALWA OPIUM.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Sir James Westland, in his Budget Speech at Calcutta, is correctly reported to have stated that the Indian Government had made arrangements for the purchase of crude opium in Malwa; how much is it intended to purchase; have these arrangements received his sanction; and what precedents there are for such arrangements?

*Sir E. GREY: The official report of Sir James Westland's speech contains the statement cited. The Secretary of State has no information as to the amount of Malwa opium it is intended to purchase. Such arrangements are within the discretion of the Government of India, and do not require the sanction of the Secretary of State. Similar purchases of Malwa opium for the supply of the Indian demand have been made in previous years when the supply of Bengal opium has been short.

### TRACTION ENGINES.

Captain BAGOT (Westmorland, Kendal): I beg to ask the President of the the Local Government Board if he will state when he intends to ask for leave to bring in the Bill to create a uniform system of by-laws for traction engines throughout the country, and for other purposes connected with their use, which he promised in December last to a deputation from the National Association of Traction-engine Owners and Users to introduce during the present Session?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I am in communication on this subject with the County Councils Association, and hope to come to an understanding with them before introducing a Bill.

### TEMPLEMORE BARRACKS.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Mid. Tipperary): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is now in a position to state the intentions of the War Office with respect to the future of the Templemore Barracks?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No decision has yet been arrived at as regards the future occupation of Templemore Barracks.

### FIELD ARTILLERY BATTERIES.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, with regard to the paragraph in his statement which describes the Field Artillery as hitherto "inadequate," and proposes, by a rearrangement of the depôts, to raise seven additional field batteries, what is meant by an allusion to an increase of the number of guns available "by 42;" whether the number is arrived at by counting seven field batteries at six guns; whether the batteries, in fact, have six guns fully horsed in time of peace; and what is the increase in the number of guns to be kept fully horsed over the present number if those available from the depôts at the present moment are counted in the list?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir; the number of field artillery batteries is increased from 38 to 45; that is, by seven batteries of six guns each. All the batteries have six guns; but the 32 batteries on the lower establishment, which are the last for service, have only four guns horsed, the other two being kept in battery store charge at their stations ready for horsing when required. The increase of guns for active service is, therefore, 42; but 14 of these are found by the disestablished depôts, leaving 28 to be provided otherwise.

### THE BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS. COMMISSION.

MR. C. M. RAMSAY (Forfar): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Royal Commission on Bovine Tuberculosis have yet drawn up their Report, and how soon its publication may be expected?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE said the Report of the Royal Commission on Bovine Tuberculosis had been made, and a copy of it laid upon the Table of the House.

### CHINA AND JAPAN.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given private notice—namely, if he can inform the House whether the terms of peace between China and Japan include the establishment of an offensive and defensive alliance?

*SIR E. GREY: The precise terms have not been officially communicated to Her Majesty's Government, and I am not, therefore, at liberty to make any statement with regard to it.

### IRISH SOLDIERS AND THE SHAMROCK.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Irish soldiers belonging to the 22nd Company, Royal Artillery, Central District, and to the 1st and 8th Companies, Western District, Malta, were ordered on St. Patrick's Day to remove from their helmets the shamrock which they wore in honour of the national festival of Ireland; and, if so, upon what authority the order was given; and whether it is intended to deprive Irish soldiers of the right to wear the emblem of their country upon St. Patrick's Day?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The General Officer commanding at Malta states that, on St. Patrick's Day, Lieutenant Quain, No. 8 Company, Royal Artillery, and Sergeant Scanlan, No. 22 Company, Royal Artillery, when parading for church ordered the men to remove the shamrocks from their helmets, the former explaining that it might be worn after parade. No orders from superior authority had been given on the subject, and the officer and non-commissioned officer, who are Irishmen, considered that they were justified by the Regulations in not allowing any departure from the dress prescribed for parades. The men made no application on the subject, and no complaints.

Mr. W. REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether we are to understand that if application had been made by the men they would have been allowed to wear the shamrocks?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say. That would have been left to the discretion of the lieutenant in command and the sergeant.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I would ask, in view of the undoubted feeling created in Ireland over this and other similar matters, whether the right hon. Gentleman will state his opinion as to whether Irish soldiers should be allowed the gratification of wearing national emblems on St. Patrick's Day?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have already explained my opinion. I see no harm in wearing the emblem, provided it causes no offence to the other soldiers who are concerned. But in this case it appears that the officer commanding and the N.C. officer, both being Irishmen, thought it was undesirable that anything extra regimental and beyond the ordinary uniform should be worn at the Church parade, but it was intimated to the men that they might wear shramrocks at any other time of the day. In that case I do not think there is any necessity for interfering with the discretion of the officer.

Mr. W. REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware of the fact that, upon St. Patrick's Day, in Dublin there is a general military parade in the castle yard, which is taken part in by the Lord Lieutenant, and at which the Lord Lieutenant himself and the officers and men are allowed to wear the shamrock; and why, if they are allowed to wear the shamrock in Ireland, should they not be allowed to do so in Malta?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not see why they might not wear anything they like of that innocent and laudable nature. At the same time I do not think it need be made of so great importance.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I submit this is a matter of very considerable importance. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will take some steps to have it generally circulated in the ranks of the Army that, on St. Patrick's Day, Irish soldiers should be allowed to wear the shamrock, provided that they ask leave to do so?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I must leave that to the common-sense and good feelings of those commanding units in the Army, who, I feel quite certain, will do what is right?

Mr. W. REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in the notices which are posted in Ireland as to enlistments in the Army, have inserted in it the statement that——

*Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Gentleman is exceeding the limits, and should give notice of that question.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I certainly bow to your ruling, Sir; but I beg to give notice that on the first——

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice in the ordinary way.

## THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

Mr. J. C. MACDONA: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will advise Her Majesty to command that her birthday should be celebrated in the United Kingdom on 24th May, as is the case in all our colonies and foreign possessions, so that an universal holiday may be kept in commemoration of it simultaneously amongst Her Majesty's subjects all over the world?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I see no reason for altering the practice which has subsisted with regard to the celebration of Her Majesty's birthday for 58 years.

## TITHE ON AGRICULTURAL LAND.

Major RASCH: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Rev. W. Ramsey, rector of Wyfordby, has stated that he has the permission of Lord Rosebery to make public a scheme for reducing tithe on agricultural land, which is about to receive the consideration of her Majesty's Government—namely, that the County Court Judge should be empowered to remit so much of the tithe rent-charge as is in excess of one-tenth of the value of the product; whether this represents the views of the Government; and, whether the scheme will apply to Essex?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I understand that the gentleman referred to sent in a scheme to Lord Rosebery, which was acknowledged in the ordinary course. The Government have, in no sense, adopted the scheme, or accept any responsibility for it.

### CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeen, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will put down the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill as first Order of the Day for Thursday?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, that has been already arranged.

MR. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanark, S.): May I ask whether the Crofters' Bill is in future to take precedence over all other Scottish legislation?

MR. A. B. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): May I ask when it is likely that Vote 8 of the Navy Estimate, on which the boiler question can be considered, will be taken?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am afraid it cannot be taken this week, but I will endeavour to fix an early day.

MR. HOZIER subsequently repeated his question as to the Crofters' Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I said it was to have the first place on Thursday.

### THE SCOTCH GRAND COMMITTEE.

MR. J. H. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer when it was the intention of the Government to set up the Scottish Grand Committee?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No, sir; I am not able at present to make a statement about that.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. W. REDMOND asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he could state at what time the Committee stage of the Land Bill was likely to be taken, and whether it would be before or after the Committee stage of the Welsh Church Bill.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: It was always understood that it would be after the Welsh Church Bill.

MR. DALZIEL asked if it was the intention of the Government to make any Motion for appropriating the time of the House?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Proper notice of that will be given.

MR. DALZIEL: Will it be on the first Friday?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: That will appear from the notice.

MR. DALZIEL: May I ask whether notice will be given before Friday?

[No answer was given].

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### THE LATE SPEAKER.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (SIR W. HARCOURT, Derby) Moved—

> "That the Order for the Committee on Her Majesty's most gracious answer to the Address have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion."

Motion agreed to, and the House went into Committee,

MR. MELLOR in the Chair.

(In the Committee.)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: In accordance with the Notice I gave yesterday, and in conformity with Her Majesty's gracious answer to the Address of this House, I beg to Move—

> "That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the right hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel, the late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of him the said right hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel."

MR. J. KEIR HARDIE (West Ham, S.) moved as an Amendment that the sum of £4,000 be deleted, and the sum of £1,000 inserted in its place. He observed that it appeared to him when the House of Commons seemed neither to have the time nor the inclination to provide a system of pensions for the aged workers of the country, it should not be called upon to agree to a

Resolution of this kind. He made this Motion out of no disrespect to the recent occupant of the Chair, and he cordially endorsed all that was said of the right hon. Gentleman on the occasion of his retirement. But when there were such glaring anomalies between wealth and poverty in the country, and when they had, as they had less than two years ago, a worker who had served Her Majesty's Government as an ordinary workman for close upon 30 years driven to commit suicide in his old age because no pension or other provision had been made in cases of his kind, it seemed to him imperative that some protest should be made against proposals of this description. He would not enter into the question of pensions, but would content himself by moving his Amendment.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I think I shall be best consulting the feelings of the House by not entering into a discussion of this Amendment. I was going to say—but for the interposition of the hon. Member, whose convictions I respect—it is the unanimous feeling of this House that no man has ever deserved the recognition of the House of Commons, which it is the object of this resolution to affirm, better than the late Speaker. Under these circumstances I hope the Motion will be carried.

On the Question being put, the declaration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that "the Ayes have it" was challenged by Mr. Keir Hardie. The House having accordingly been cleared for a division,

THE CHAIRMAN asked the hon. Member to name a co-teller.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: I must request you, Sir, to name one of the clerks at the table to tell along with me.

THE CHAIRMAN: As there is no second teller, I declare that "the Ayes have it."

Main Question put, and agreed to.

The Resolution was ordered to be reported to the House to-morrow.

### THE CHARITY COMMISSION.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) rose to call attention to the report of the Select Committee (1894) on the Charity Commission, and to move:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, in order to secure greater Parliamentary control over the work now entrusted to the Charity Commission and an administration of the same more in harmony with public opinion, the Commission should be reconstituted and placed as a subordinate department under a Minister of State."

The motion, he said, was the issue and outcome of the action of the House a year ago, when it appointed a Select Committee to inquire into the work of the Charity Commission. The Select Committee, in accordance with the terms of reference, inquired rather into the constitutional relationship of the Commission to Parliament than the question of how that body had exercised its functions There was, in truth, less necessity for the latter course, inasmuch as Select Committees in 1884-5-6-7 investigated very largely its actions on both the charitable trusts side of the Commission and the endowed schools side. The Select Committee of last year, which did him the honour to make him its Chairman, examined a number of persons who were well qualified by their official position and experience to give evidence of the greatest value. They had before them members of the Commission itself, the indefatigable Secretary of the Commission, the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, the permanent Secretary of the Education Department, the present Lord Welby, so long known as the permanent Secretary of the Treasury, and other witnesses. Within the compass of the 4,100 questions asked and answered would be found a complete account of the origin and constitutional position, the scope and methods of procedure of the Charity Commission, while the Appendices, about 20 in number, threw light on the work the Commission had done. The Committee arrived at the conclusion, set forth in paragraph 6 of their Report, that a reconstruction of the Charity Commission was inevitable. The Committee, which consisted of 15 members, was divided in the proportion of nine to six — a very substantial majority, equivalent in that House to one of over a hundred for a Government. The Motion was based on the Report of the Committee, which recommended that the Commission should be reconstructed, and placed as a subordinate department under a Minister of State. Certain salient features with regard to the Commission came out pointedly and clearly in the evidence. In the first place, it was an unpopular body. That was not his phrase but that of the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland, who had himself been a Charity Commissioner and occupied a high post in the late Administration. The hon. Member used the expression when the Local Government Bill was before the House in 1893, and he repeated it again on the 30th March of last year. The explanation the hon. Member gave of its unpopularity was not altogether the right one. He said it was too Tory for the Radicals and too Radical for the Tories. That, however, did not cover the ground, because the complaints made against the Charity Commissioners were not altogether or even mainly of a political character. He could not accept the explanation of the hon. Gentleman that the unpopularity of the Commissioners was due to political feeling, but he entirely agreed with him that they were unpopular, which was a most unfortunate position for a body of public servants to occupy. In the case of the Christ's Hospital scheme, without pronouncing any opinion of his own, he must point out that there could not be so much feeling in high quarters quite irrespective of political views unless there were some ground existing for it. He did not think that those interested in the matter could do better than ask the House to appoint a small Committee to inquire into what ground there was for that feeling. There was no subject upon which the Committees which had sat to consider the question felt so strongly as the introduction of the representative element on boards of trustees that managed the charities of the country, and the evidence showed that the introduction of the representative element, as far as it had been introduced, had put an end to the religious difficulty that had, unhappily, been so prominent some years ago. Yet it appeared from the appendices that in the case of Endowed Schools schemes the representative element was only introduced in the proportion of 700 to 1,300 Trustees, and in the Charitable Trusts to the extent of 400 to 1,300. The constitution of the Charity Commission was cumbrous, its procedure was most complicated and dilatory, and its methods were certainly not calculated to attract or preserve the co-operation of those affected, who in most cases possessed a much better knowledge of what was required than the persons sitting in Whitehall. In reference to the allegation that the Commission was weak in Parliament, Sir Henry Longley had remarked that—

> "In the last 12 or 15 years we have attracted the attention of Parliament so continually that it becomes, of course, a question how far the work can be carried on without political support."

Being asked this question—

> "All other departments have to derive the momentum which carries their policy through Parliament from the political party which happens to be in power, and you have not?"

He replied—

> "No; and they have another momentum, a momentum which helps them to get what they want from the Treasury; and we have not got the help of a political chief or representative either to defend our policy or to help us in getting the means to do our work."

It was a most significant example of weakness in Parliament that at five o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, the 9th September 1893, the right hon. Leader of the Opposition, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and the right hon. Member for Thanet came down to the House in order to do a good turn to the Commissioners, and voted in favour of the reduction of their salaries, putting in the strongest form known their official imprimatur by appointing the official tellers of the Opposition in the Division. It was certainly an evidence of the non-political character of the complaints against the Commission that the hon. Member for Herefordshire had in the early part of the Session actually succeeded in inducing the House to reject absolutely and entirely one of the schemes of the Commissioners. The Board was constituted under two different groups of Acts of Parliament, which were passed under different impulses and currents of public opinion, with dissimilar principles running through them, conferring divergent powers, and requiring almost contradictory procedure. Thus, three out of the five Commissioners held their positions, like the Judges, "during good behaviour," whilst the other two held theirs "during pleasure" only. There was no Parliamentary control. A *quasi*-judicial character attached to the charity side of the Commission, but it was admitted by the Chief Commissioners that it was not a court. On the endowed schools side there was initiative, but it it was not sufficiently connected with the locality; there was a very large discretion and Parliamentary control of a sort, but this was largely illusory. When they contrasted the procedure applicable to charity schemes and endowed school schemes with the simple, efficacious, and economical procedure which was known as their provisional order system, they could not fail to be astonished that the complicated and cumbrous procedure of the Charity Commission should have survived so long. It became apparent, as the evidence given before the Committee proceeded, that althought there was in the Commission this kind of dual control, its two component parts were inextricably intertwined. The powers of the Charity Commission over endowed schools were derived, not so much from the Endowed Schools Act, as might be naturally supposed, as from the Charitable Trusts Acts. Well might Sir Henry Longley say that "our position is unique," and well might Mr. Ritchie say that "it is very anomalous." Relatively the cost of this Commission was far too large. In 1879 the House was asked for £29,000 for the expense of the Commission, but this year they were asked for £43,000. This increase was startling, and the Treasury were responsible for it in that House. In his evidence before the Committee, Lord Welby said, that from the Treasury point of view, this Commission was top-heavy, unusually manned, and antiquated; and the late Mr. W. H. Smith, than whom a better man of business never sat in that House, issued a Minute, when First Lord of the Treasury, in which Minute he laid down that the Commission was costing too much, and that the number of the lay Commissioners ought to be brought down so as to come within the limit intended originally. That, in the words of Lord Welby, was an unusual course, and to that extent the more striking. It was remarkable how circumstances, rather, perhaps, than its own will, had diverted the Charity Commission into channels and relations not contemplated when it was set up. The late Mr. W. E. Forster, when introducing the Endowed Schools Bill in 1869, said that what was meant by the Bill was "the Government of the day working by special help." But this intention had not been fulfilled, and the case had really become one in which the Commissioners were the masters, and in which the Minister of the Education Department was the Minister of the Commission carrying out its behests. The Charity Commission had, in fact, become supreme instead of the Government. With reference to the relations between local authorities and the Commission, he would quote a passage from the evidence of Lord Lyttelton, the Chairman of the Endowed Schools Committee of 1873—

> "The Schools Inquiry Commission never intended that the immense, often invidious, always difficult, functions in the reconstitution of endowments should be placed in the hands of a single central authority. They intended to rest the whole fabric on two great equal pillars—a central and a local authority. It was the provincial not the central authority which was in the first instance to fix the grade of schools, to consolidate foundations, and to propose the entire schemes for their regulation."

What an enormous chasm there was between the present state of things and that contemplated by Lord Lyttelton! Of course at that time there were no such local bodies in existence as we had now. The great development of our municipalities and the establishment of county councils and parish councils, under the Acts of 1888 and 1894, had changed the whole situation. We were now in a new world, and that circumstance alone would justify an entire reconstruction of the Commission. The Committee had come to the conclusion that reconstitution was inevitable. What then was the best way in which to effect a change? He was always in favour of following precedent in cases of this kind, for he believed that continuity was of the greatest advantage to our English public life, and there was an exact precedent for the course which he was recommending the House to pursue that evening. He referred to the administrative machinery that was set up in consequence of that great revolution, the reform of the Poor Law. In 1834 the Government set up what was then known as the Poor Law Commission, and the parallel between that Commission and the Charity Commission was most striking. The Commission was originally set up for five years; then it became annual, and then, in 1842, the period was again fixed at five years, and it expired in 1847. By that time such an amount of experience had been accumulated as convinced the Ministers and ex-Ministers that a change was inevitable in the administrative machinery of the Board. On May 3, 1847, Sir G. Grey, the Home Secretary, said, with respect to the original constitution of the Board—

> "It was thought that the persons who were to be invested with the discretionary powers to be exercised by a central authority ought not to form any part of the Executive Government; that they should remain free from that popular influence which must necessarily operate in a greater or less degree upon all public men. It was thought better, also, that no political changes should be allowed to affect those who were to be intrusted with these powers."

The principle of the Bill which Sir G. Grey was then moving was that there should be a general superintending authority immediately responsible to Parliament. That was what he suggested in the Motion he now submitted to the House. On May 17, 1847, the Second Reading of that Bill came on, and it continued for four nights, and he would respectfully suggest to hon. Members that they should read that debate. They would there find almost precisely the arguments he had used that afternoon. They could also find on the other side almost exactly the arguments which the hon. Member for Tonbridge was going to address to the House. They did not commend themselves to the leaders of those who used them at the time, as he hoped the arguments of the hon. Member would not commend themselves to his leaders to-day. On that occasion Lord John Russell, who was then First Lord of the Treasury, made a most singular admission for a man in his position. He said he believed he was the person who induced Lord Althorp to turn from his original intention of constituting a Poor Law Board into a State Department, but that he had been completely mistaken, that he had taken an entirely wrong view. But the most vital language used in that debate was the language of Mr. Disraeli, who, with that extraordinary sagacity which he always showed, said:—

> "Though I admit that the noble Lord is a great authority, I cannot admit that he was correct in the advice he then gave to Lord Althorp. The general business of the country must be brought under the control of the House of Commons. A certain interposition of factious sentiment, indeed, may occasionally be incident to such a process, but when we look at the nature of our Parliamentary Constitution, we shall find that attempts to carry on the business of the country without the interference of Parliament, the palpable interference of Parliament, have always proved a failure."

Those were words of wisdom, and he sheltered himself under that great authority in making this Motion. He contended that that was the case with the Charity Commission. What was needed? Two things; on the one hand, responsibility by a Minister, some one at the table who could be asked and who could answer questions in the House, and on the other hand, a greater use to be made of local authorities. His Motion asked that the Charity Commission should be reconstituted and placed, as a subordinate department, under a Minister of State. Of one thing he was perfectly certain, and that was that they could not job and carve the present business of the Commission. There was no question, in his view, that Sir Henry Longley spoke words of truth and wisdom when he said:—

> "I think if our work is to be taken over, it must be taken over as a whole."

Later on he was asked:—

> "You are now of opinion that if a change in your Parliamentary position is to be made, one single Minister should be responsible, both for your Charitable Trusts work, and for your work under the Endowed Schools Acts?"

And he answered:—

> "I think so."

And the Committee were of the same opinion. They believed that the work of the Commission could not be dealt with piecemeal, but must all be taken over and placed under a responsible Minister. The hon. Member for the Tonbridge Division deprecated the Motion on the ground that the Charity Commission dealt with a large amount of judicial or *quasi* judicial business. He gathered, however, that the hon. Member was in agreement with himself with respect to much that he suggested, and if his difficulty with respect to judicial business could be removed, he might be brought to support the Motion.

That, at all events, was the sum of his Amendment, that this Commission was a judicial body and that it was a terrible thing to interfere with a judicial body. He would leave his hon. Friend the Member for Lanarkshire to deal with that point, but he would like to remind the hon. Member for Tonbridge of the very striking testimony given to the Committee by Sir George Kekewich. He said:—

> "I suppose there is no department, or very few departments, so subjected to what is called constant political pressure, as the Education Department. I have never known political pressure, speaking generally, result in anything but good."

Later on the same gentleman said that they had no difficulty whatever in preserving that continuity of policy which, he agreed, ought to be the object of a Commission like the Charity Commission. In paragraph 13 of the Report of the Committee this matter was fully dealt with. The Committee there stated that they saw no insuperable difficulty in the matter, and proposed that the lines indicated by the Committee of 1884 should be followed and that the Commission should be placed under a Minister. He did not desire to commit the House to the Minister of Education, and therefore, he spoke of a Minister only in his Motion. He was opposed to the creation of new offices. In a matter of this kind it was not for him, an independent Member, to suggest a method. He had discharged his duty, as it seemed to him, by bringing the matter before the House. This matter would, of course, have to issue in a Bill, and that Bill must be prepared by the responsible Government on careful advice. He simply indicated that, in his humble judgment, it was on the lines of the Poor Law Board precedent in 1847, and following the advice of Lord John Russell, Sir George Grey and Mr. Disraeli, that this matter must be settled. He thanked the House most sincerely for the kind way in which they had listened to him and he most respectfully and earnestly, and with the conviction that things could not stand as they were at the present moment, submitted his Motion to the House.

*Mr. HARRY LAWSON (Gloucestershire, Cirencester), in seconding the Motion, said, he wished to emphasise the point already made, that neither its proposal by his hon. Friend, nor its acceptance by the House, involved one jot or tittle of censure or reflection on the successive generations of men who had sat at the Board of the Charity Commission since 1884. He certainly would be no party to any such expression, for he believed that they had been a most distinguished body, and if, without offence, he might single out one, he should say that Sir H. Longley, the present head of the Commission, was one of the most eminent among the Civil Servants of the Crown. In the voluminous evidence that that gentleman had given before so many Select Committees and Royal Commissions, he was himself, or rather in spite of himself, the strongest advocate of the change in the constitution of the Commission and its relations to Parliament that was now proposed. Sir H. Longley's constant complaint was that the Commission was weak and almost defenceless in Parliament, and that it was quite unable to secure those further powers which were so absolutely necessary for dealing with the endowed charities of the country. The reason was, that, by the attempt to keep the Commission from Parliamentary control and Party Government, it was deliberately kept out of touch with public opinion, and had to encounter a general hostility, both outside and inside the House, that attempts at independence were sure to beget. The precedent of the Poor Law Board had been quoted as a case in point, to prove the failure, the necessary failure, of these extra-Parliamentary Departments. In the Debate of 1847 that was admitted all round. Sir G. Grey, speaking for the Government on the Second Reading of the Poor Law Administration Bill, used this language—

> "I can only repeat," he said, "what I stated upon a former occasion, that when the Act of 1834 was passed, His Majesty's Government felt that the persons to be entrusted with discretionary powers to carry this Act into effect should be kept aloof from all Party conflicts and popular influence. I stated, however, that experience had proved the inconvenience of this arrangement, and that the removal of the Poor Law Commissioners from the influence of popular opinion had a bad effect upon them, as well as interferred with that direct responsible discretion which, in the case of Ministers of the Crown, was found so beneficial."

He did not want to press the argument too far. It had been said that reasoning from false analogy was the most dangerous of fallacies. It was quite true that the Charity Commission had a mouthpiece in the House in the person of the Parliamentary Commissioner, but his position, it seemed to him, was as anomalous and unsatisfactory as the wit of man could make it. In the first place it had never been definitely settled whether or not he should be a Member of the Government, holding the post in a formal and disconnected way. The first Parliamentary Commissioner appointed was, at the time, a private Member, but from Sir G. Grey's resignation down to 1887, he was always a Member of the Government, and for nearly all the time the post was attached to that of Vice President of the Council. Some of those Ministers attended the Board, particularly Mr. Lowe, who made himself well acquainted with the work; but the great majority, in fact, all. after the passing of the Endowed Schools Act, felt themselves unable to do so, as they could not sit in judgment on their own acts, against which they might vainly have protested in the initial stage of an Endowed School Scheme. The Vice President of the Council told the Committee of last year, that he felt very doubtful whether he ought not to have assumed the office, but as he was liable to be outvoted at the Board he did not. Practically during that time the Charity Commission was unrepresented in Parliament. Since then, as a private Member, the Fourth Commissioner had been able to speak for them, and although he had not the power to defend the Estimate he did his best to explain the points of policy that arose in connection with it. In this House, however, he had no privileges and no force in virtue of his office. No Parliamentary momentum was derived from his representation. At the Board his position was not different from his colleagues, and he had no priority of any kind. Consequently, he could not fairly be held to be responsible for what they did or what they left undone. For years past the Commission had been seeking fresh powers. At the present moment it could not deal in a practical fashion with any charities the annual income of which exceeded £50. According to Sir H. Longley's evidence before the Committee of 1884, they were thus debarred from dealing with what was far the largest part of the charitable endowments of the country—

> "On the best information I can get I believe that the proportion in value which the charities with incomes below £50 a year bear to the total is about 15 per cent., about 85 per c nt. of the total income being attributed to charities above £50 a year."

It was quite true that in the case of the City of London Parochial Charities they obtained special powers by the Act of 1884, but in the case of other cities, where a reform of uses and a readjustment of areas was just as much needed, the Commission had declared that they despaired of being able to attain their object. The ancient charities of Bristol in particular were well-known to need the same sort of treatment. Such glaring inequalities were only to be remedied and set right by additional Parliamentary powers, and an unimproved Charity Commission would never receive them. The great complaint against their administration, as a general charge, had been that they had perverted funds meant for the poor and needy to the purposes of middle-class education. Undoubtedly strange things had been done in this way. The diversion of apprenticeship funds to this purpose after Sir G. Jessel's judgment in the case of the Campden Charities might be perfectly right when technical instruction was given in the same or similar trades; but for the great bulk of working people the course of a commercial education would be no adequate substitute for the training of hand and eye under the old order of things. Where scholarships on the ladder system were provided out of charitable funds the tendency was to give to the few who were chosen what was really meant for the many who were weak. It was quite true that of late, in dealing with dole charities, a different view had prevailed, but he did not think that it was possible to satisfy the new demands of public policy except by a general change in the relations of the Department to Parliament. This was no opinion of his own. Sir H. Longley was examined at length by the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor. His evidence was deemed so important that it was separately summarised in the Report, and his recommendations were endorsed—

> "But although," they say, "they are able to do much, the Charity Commissioners need, we

are told, wider powers for dealing with doles. Such are (1) the same power to deal with charities with incomes exceeding £50 a year as they possess for dealing with smaller ones; (2) further powers for extending the area to which any charity is applicable, and for amalgamating charities when co-existent in the same area; and (3) a general power of summary conversion of doles to other uses—*e.g.*, pensions, without reference to the *cy-près*, doctrine, such as that given with regard to education under the Endowed Schools Acts. Those powers should, we think, be placed in the hands of the Commissioners, subject to proper safeguards."

If this was to be done, Parliament would insist, as he himself admitted, on further control. The witness wished the Commission to be wholly free from the restraints of judge-made law. If so, the only distinction that might be alleged to exist between the Charity Commission and other Departments of State at once disappeared. On the other side of its work the case was even stronger. The Endowed Schools Commissions held their office on the precarious tenure of Expiring Acts Continuance. They asked, and rightly asked, for a permanent arrangement. Their part of the Commission was in no sense judicial; it was purely administrative. They acted under statutory powers, without reference to the doctrines of the Court of Chancery. When they were instituted Mr. Forster spoke of them as "officers assisting the Government." "It is the Government of the day working by special help." He never pretended they could be independent of Parliament. It now seemed, however, that their peculiar position was the course of constant friction and delay in their dealings with the Education Department. The right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, on the one hand, and the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, on the other, both gave evidence to this effect—

"It leads," says the former, "to a certain cast-iron way of dealing with educational endowments." "Ministerial responsibility is reduced almost to nothing." "What I feel," said the Vice President, "is, that the greater become the demands in this country for a complete organisation of Secondary Education, the more the interest taken by the Minister himself and the Education Department in the work, the more it appears to me will the weakness, if I may so call it, in the present machinery tend to become apparent."

Besides that, the Commissioners themselves admitted that in any reorganisation of the Education Department, such as must surely follow on the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education now sitting, the educational side of their work must be attached and subordinated to it. Sir H. Longley, in his concluding evidence thought it would be possible to separate the educational from the charitable endowments, but the slightest inquiry showed that the two were so inextricably mixed up as to make it virtually impossible to separate them into two departments. The House had thus a multiplication of red tape, and a continuance of confusion all caused by the existing system, whilst its advocates themselves admitted the urgent need of further powers from Parliament, which Parliament sullenly refused. Since the Commission was founded, since the Endowed Schools Act was passed, there had been a complete reformation of the local government of the country. Municipal Corporations possessed not a tithe of the powers they now had. In addition to them they had the universal network of popular local authorities in the Metropolis and the rural districts. Personally he moved to insert in the Report of the Select Committee a paragraph following out their own recommendations—

"that all draft schemes should be submitted to these bodies for comment and advice, and that any recommendation made by these authorities should be carefully weighed and considered in Amending the schemes."

It was admitted by the official witnesses that this had not been done to any large extent. He was altogether in favour of consulting local opinion and obtaining local support, and until there was a real measure of Parliamentary control he did not believe it would be possible. The new order of local government required the change. He could anticipate the two main objections that would be urged —first, it would be said that Parliamentary interference was likely to do harm, but at the present moment this House was always criticising and carping at the Charity Commission. The House of Lords had the same right as the House of Commons of presenting addresses on schemes under the Endowed Schools Act. Lately this power had been several times exercised in the case of Welsh counties. Then it was a curious notion that the fact of placing a Department of State under a Parliamentary chief, meant that it would be worked all through on Party lines. What happened with such an Office as the Local Government Board? Every day it dealt with the most minute business of local administration; it made its orders for a great variety of purposes, and in the same way the Charity Commission work would fall into its proper place. Or again, take the Commission of Woods and Forests, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the head, yet no complaint was made that a political colour was given to its administration. Secondly, it would be asserted that the duties of the Charity Commission were judicial, At the present moment several Departments of the Government were doing judicial work. In a sense, many of the functions of such a Department as the Board of Trade were judicial, particularly in regard to patents and to bankruptcy. County Councils also had many quasi-judicial duties. However, granted that in applying the *cy-près* doctrines of the Court of Chancery the Charity Commission did judicial work, in regard to schemes under the Endowed Schools Act, they were in no way bound by judicial decisions, but acted with the ordinary administrative discretion. What was now happening? Why, Sir H. Longley asked the Aged Poor Commission to relieve his Board from the bonds and fetters of the *cy-près* doctrine, and to allow them to apply to all dole charities the general powers of an administrative body. The Charity Commission itself asked for this relief. A difficulty had been raised that it would be undesirable to have an appeal from a Minister at the head of a Department to the courts of law. In the case of Endowed Schools schemes, there was now an appeal to the Privy Council. Apart from this, there were several Departments where the courts of law stepped in and controlled certain of their functions. The Inland Revenue was part of the Exchequer, but frequently the Commissioners appeared in court and were bound by the judgment of the court. In the same way the Charity Commission would answer, and not the Parliamentary head. He maintained that the difficulties in the way of this Resolution being carried out were in no sense prohibitive. The Charity Commission was weak, and likely to become weaker as things now were. It ought to answer to the new needs of local government, and it could not do do so. To re-model it was, no doubt, a delicate task; but it was only by establishing the two principles of Ministerial responsibility for its work, and Parliamentary control of its work, that it could be a sufficient safeguard of the interests of the poor, and as efficient, as they all would wish, for the purposes of social reform.

MR. A. S. T. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said, that he was very sorry to find himself differing from the two Gentlemen who had spoken, and with whom he had worked for 21 days on the Committee last year. He had no doubt that those hon. Gentlemen were animated by an endeavour to do something for the public good, but he differed entirely from them as to the means which they proposed, and as to the construction they placed upon the evidence before the Committee. He was rather amused to find in the Blue Book that the first words were:—"Your Committee have agreed to the following report;" for, as far as he was aware, the Committee "agreed" to nothing. On four occasions they were equally divided, and the Chairman had to give his casting vote. They took, altogether, 30 divisions, and it could not be said that they "agreed" to the Report in any sense of the word. It was, in fact, he thought, a Report of no importance, and one which could not be taken as a basis for legislation. On one occasion the Chairman's Draft Report was actually defeated upon a paragraph contained in it to the effect that direct Parliamentary control must precede all reform. That was too much for two of the Chairman's own supporters, one of whom sat on the Front Bench. That paragraph accordingly disappeared from the Draft Report, and the Committee had to adjourn in order that the Chairman might consider what should be done next. The two hon. Members opposite now proposed to subject the Charity Commission to the direct control of Parliament by placing at the head of it a minister responsible to Parliament. But what had they told the House to-day in support of that proposal? They had brought forward no scheme, and had given no reason why this tremendous change should be made. They had stated that the Charity Commission was weak, but the Committee were told that six extra clerks were all that were necessary to enable it to do its work efficiently. Were they to be now asked to make this great change merely that Parliament might appoint six extra clerks? It had been suggested that no Bill dealing with the Charity Commission could be passed through Parliament under the present system, but he would point out that in the last Parliament two Bills did pass through that House, namely the Charitable Trusts Act of 1887, and the Charitable Trusts Recovery Act of 1891. This, therefore, disproved the suggestion that the machinery of the Charity Commission could not be improved without subjecting it to direct Parliamentary control. Although he quite agreed that certain reforms in administration were desirable, he asserted that those improvements could be very well effected without turning the Charity Commission topsy-turvy, and without subjecting it to direct Parliamentary control. It was proposed to make it subject to a Minister, and that Minister was to be the Minister of Education.

*Mr. J. ELLIS: Not necessarily; I stated expressly "Minister of State."

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said, it was certainly understood, and was suggested in the evidence, that it was to be the Minister of Education, and he would put this first objection. What had a Minister of Education to do with doles? and why should the distribution of coal and blankets and petticoats come under the Education Department? These were eleemosynary matters, and the Education Department would, in fact, be greatly hampered by having to deal with them. He could only suppose that some persons desired to convert the blankets into English grammars or something of that kind.

Mr. ACLAND: I do not.

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN said, he was not referring to the right hon. Gentleman, but to the "ideal Ministry" which was suggested to them. But his real objection was this. It was proved beyond all doubt before the Committee that the most important part of the work of the Charity Commission was judicial work. They had the evidence of Sir Henry Longley, who told the Committee, in answer to Question 493, that the judicial and administrative work was so mixed up that it was impossible to draw a line between the two. Mr. Fearon and Lord Welby gave similar evidence, and the chief witness, Lord Davey, said that he could not bring his mind to understand how anybody could doubt that the work of the Charity Commission was of a judicial character, and the same witness also stated that the jurisdiction of the Charity Commission was only a part of the jurisdiction of the old Court of Chancery; that the same jurisdiction as that of the old Court of Chancery was now exercised by the Chancery Division of the High Court in all cases that did not come within the Charitable Trusts Acts, that was to say when the income exceeded £50 a year; and he further showed how, in framing schemes, the Charity Commissioners had to construe old wills, deeds and instruments of foundation, and to apply the law according to the doctrine of *cy-près*, that was to say, according to the doctrine whereby the charity must be applied to purposes as near as possible to the wishes of the founder. He had no doubt that the doctrine of *cy-près* was very much discredited among hon. Members opposite, and that they were unwilling to recognise it as a legal doctrine, being, as they were, often anxious to see charitable funds applied to purposes as far removed as possible from the founders' wishes. There was, however, this undoubted fact, that the Charity Commissioners had to apply legal rules to their decisions. And yet the House was asked to subject the Charity Commission to the control of Parliament, which would then have a right to criticise and even to reverse decisions arrived at judicially. It had been the custom of Parliament always to look to the Charity Commissioners as a judicial body acting judicially, and as a body acting according to the rules of law; and for that reason, and upon that supposition, certain powers had been given from time to time to the Charity Commissioners. One of the most difficult questions that the Charity Commissioners had to decide was, what charities were ecclesiastical and what were not; what belonged to the Church and to other denominations, and a large number of these duties had been added to them by the Local Government Act 1894, with the consent of both sides of the House. It was now proposed to entirely alter the character of the Charity Commission—in other words, to bring within the scope of political pressure those which they had hitherto thought were free from it. He ventured to say that Parliament had no intention of doing anything of the kind when the Local Government Act was passed, and that if it was now done it would be a distinct breach of faith. How did the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division meet the evidence of Lord Davey? He had said that—

> "On careful examination and analysis, a considerable portion of the judicial work of the Charity Commissioners would appear to be very similar to that now transacted by other Government Departments."

Yes, but Lord Davey was asked on that very point whether he knew of any other Government Department which exercised so many judicial functions such as those he had described as the Charity Commission, and he replied that he did not, adding that the jurisdiction was of a totally different character. His hon. Friend, who seconded the motion, afterwards asked Lord Davey whether, if a Corporation went to the Local Government Board for advice, the Board would not give it in the same way that the Charity Commission did to trustees? Lord Davey replied in the affirmative, but said that whilst the advice given by the Local Government Board or any other Government Department would not be binding—would not free the person to whom the advice was given from the penalties of the law—that given by the Charity Commission would be of a binding character. Thus it was shown that the Charity Commission was a court of law far more than a Government Department, that their work was legal in a sense, that the work of no Government Department was. He submitted, therefore, that the work done by the Commission was, on the authority of so eminent a man as Lord Davey, totally different to that performed by a Government Department, and that to make the Commission a Government Department in the sense of other Departments would be to alter the whole character and position of that body. The Mover and Seconder of the Motion had pointed out that the Endowed Schools Commissioners were able to act in a sense independent of the law, that they were under the control of Parliament, that Parliament had given them a right to act within the utmost limits of their discretion, and that they were responsible to Parliament only. If they desired to make the Charity Commission subject to Parliamentary control in that sense, they would have to say that the Commissioners were not to act according to law in future, that they were not to put a legal or judicial interpretation upon old deeds, wills, and other instruments, and that in effect, as Lord Davey said, every charity should be thrown into the hotch-pot and be dealt with as Parliament pleased. The effect of the proposal would be to subject every single charity in the country, whatever its nature, absolutely to the will of Parliament, acting through its Members. That, he urged, would not be a good thing. He did not think that if a man left a charity for a specific object to-day, Parliament should be able to-morrow to take that charity and divert it to some other purpose, perhaps of a totally different character, and in a different locality. Such a state of things would hardly be desirable for a Member of Parliament, and it would certainly be bad for Parliamentary government that a Minister of Education should be liable and subjected to pressure, as he would be, in such circumstances. But what he contended was that the whole scheme contemplated should be placed before the House. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had said there must be Parliamentary control, but he had not shown what it would involve. He seemed to think that there could be Parliamentary control in such a way that Parliament could reverse the decisions of what was practically a Court of Law, and yet leave the Charity Commissioners bound by legal trammels. That was simply impracticable. It had been stated by the hon. Member for Cirencester, in proof of the necessity of reform, that friction had occurred, and a cumbrous state of things been brought about on the Endowed Schools side of the Charity Commission, but as the Endowed Schools Department was already under Parliamentary control, the Motion would effect no change in that direction. The Vice President had remarked that the Charity Commissioners were, in a sense, masters of his Department, because they could refuse to make an alteration in a scheme, though he made a declaration in favour of it; but, on the other hand, the Minister had absolute control over the Commissioners, for, if he chose to withhold his approval of a scheme, that scheme could go no further. Moreover, on the right hon. Gentleman being asked in how many cases the Commissioners had refused to make alteration after receiving a declaration from him, he could only mention two, one in Flintshire and the other in Cardiganshire; and the reason of the refusal was that the right hon. Gentleman had asked the Commissioners to put into those schemes a clause which was identical with one which was rejected by the House of Lords only a few weeks before. They were all agreed that certain reforms were necessary, and he was in favour of doing away with the £50 limit. But this was very different from agreeing that the whole of the Charity Commission—the charitable trust side as well as the endowed school side—shall be subject to Parliamentary control. He ventured to think that the House would be taking a far more wise and practical course if it endeavoured to carry out those reforms which would enable the Commission to more effectively do its work, than to run the risk of subjecting its great judicial work, which had been carried on so well, so fairly, so impartially, and hitherto independently, to the control of Parliament—in other words, to subject a judicial body to political pressure, a course which he was persuaded would prove to be very detrimental to the public interest.

*SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE (Exeter) rose to support the views expressed by the hon. Member who had just sat down. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham had adduced as an argument the increasing cost of the Charity Commission, but the economical argument, he thought, was hardly applicable, considering the suggestion was that a high Minister of State could put increased pressure on the Treasury for money for his Department. He had also referred to certain evidence given before the Committee by Lord Welby, but he regretted that the hon. Member had not thought it right to state that another distinguished public servant, Sir Henry Longley, had given directly contrary evidence. The contention of the Charity Commission was that they were never called upon by the Treasury to take any active step in regard to reducing their numbers, but as a matter of fact they did reduce the number of Commissioners from six to five. With regard to the Motion itself he rather shared the opinion of the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division of Kent that it was difficult to see what practical result the hon. Gentleman expected to obtain from it. As had been pointed out, practically every effective paragraph of the Report of the Select Committee was carried by a strict Party Vote, as between Liberal and Conservative, and no non-contentious legislation therefore, based on the Report, could reasonably be expected, and if in a new House the balance of parties should be altered no weight could be attached to its recommendations. He thought they were further entitled to complain a little of the vague terms of the hon. Gentleman's Resolution. The hon. Member must by this time have made up his mind as to what he proposed to substitute for the Charity Commission, and he thought he might have brought before the House some proposal giving the reforms he wished the House to adopt. As the Motion stood, Members might Vote for it who wished the Charity Commission to retain all its present powers, while making the Parliamentary Commissioner head of the Board. He understood that the creation of a Board of some kind was suggested, or the creation of such a Minister as had been hinted at by the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department. That hon. Member put the following question to Mr. Fearon when he was examined before the Committee—

> "Then you would abolish the office of Vice President of the Council as he now exists, and the Charity Commission as they now exist, and you would put in the place of the two one great Minister of State ruling education from top to bottom, from the highest to elementary, and also administering all charitable benefactions?"

If that were so, the new Vice President of the Council would have added to his present duties the educational work of the Charity Commission, the entire control of the Science and Art Department, technical education, the possible control of the Universities, and all the work now done by the Charity Commission under the Charitable Trusts Act. If any such Minister of Education was to be created, they were putting the cart before the horse, if they crippled the Charity Commission before they had got the House to affirm the necessity for his creation. He pointed out that it was possible to remove by legislation any of the specific causes of complaint against the Commission without altering its semi-independent status; whether it was expedient was a separate question. If they could get the assent of both Houses they could pass such an Act for England as the Intermediate Education Act was for Wales, they could enforce the appointment of local trustees, they could give increased powers over £50 charities, and increased powers of audit, or make, in fact, almost any change which had been referred to. There were those who were very unwilling to give the Charity Commission any material increase of power until it had been subjected to Departmental control, and thus there was a fundamental difference of opinion. He was quite certain that if they converted the Commission into a political Department they must abandon all idea of continuity or uniformity in our educational policy. A strong Minister at the head of a great Office of State was almost bound to tinge with his own personal views the matters which were brought before him. He ventured to think that no class of legislation was so difficult to pass as hotly opposed Government Bills of secondary importance, and if the Department was made a political one he did not think that legislation in regard to these matters would receive a momentum, but quite the opposite would be the result. They would be sure to have the control of local charities made a burning question at elections with the worst possible results. This was no case for urgency, and if the position of the Commission was to be radically altered it should be part of a great administrative change, the proposals for which were not yet before the country. He should regret to see the question of the administration of Charities made a burning one at elections. If the Charities were handed over to irresponsible or ignorant persons, the *corpus* of many charities might disappear, and poor people be deprived of funds which they had hitherto enjoyed. Finally, this matter was not really urgent. The Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education might well be awaited before so serious a step as that to which the House was invited was taken. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division was more severe on the Charity Commission than he expected when he reflected on the handsome opinion which the hon. Member expressed of the Charity Commission in the Report that had been referred to.

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS said, he should regret to have it supposed, he in any way receded from that opinion. It was drawn up by him, adopted by the Committee, and he stood by every word of it.

*Sir S. NORTHCOTE said, the hon. Member expressed a deservedly high opinion of the abilities of the Charity Commissioners, and of the great services they had rendered to the country and the increasingly enlightened manner in which they had endeavoured to go with the times. He also said they numbered among them some most assiduous and capable persons. If this was so it could hardly be said that the machine was so bad that it needed immediate alteration. When the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education was received the whole position of the Charity Commissioners could be reconsidered. For the reasons he had indicated he should support the Amendment.

*Mr. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) remarked that much had been said as to the shortcomings of the Charity Commissioners. But it would not then become him to answer what had been said in any detail, because it could be more fittingly done on the Vote for the Charity Commission in the course of the Estimates. He would, therefore, confine himself to the Motion and Amendment that had been moved. But before he came to their exact subject-matter he would say a few words in reply to certain remarks that fell from hon. Members who had preceded him. Reference had been made to the unpopularity of the Charity Commission as at present constituted, and it was desirable to consider what was the cause—real or imaginary—of that unpopularity. To some extent it was due, not to any defect in the system under which they existed or to any shortcomings of the members who composed the Commission, to whose ability and conscientiousness a well-deserved tribute had been paid in the course of the Debate. It might rather be said to be due to the conditions imposed upon them by the statutes of the realm. He would illustrate this by three examples. The most serious condition was that imposed by the £50 limit. It would hardly be believed to what extent the work of the Commission was hampered by the existence of that limit, and to what extent the misunderstandings which sometimes occurred in the country were due to the fact that it was not known that the Commission was so hampered. He would give one example of the operation of the £50 limit. Under the Local Government Act of last year it became one of the duties of the Charity Commissioners to distinguish between what was educational and what was non-educational with regard to charities. In every case in which the income of a charity exceeded £50 it was necessary for them to frame a scheme, and that could only be framed with the consent of the existing trustees. In many cases that consent was refused, and the carrying out of the duty imposed upon the Charity Commission by the Local Government Act of 1894 was rendered impossible. Then the Commissioners were sometimes taken to task because, in some particular cases, they did not introduce the element of popular representation. He had a case of the kind in his mind at that moment. In that case—which was typical of many others—the absence of the introduction of the popular element was due to the fact that the existing trustees refused their consent, and the Commissioners were, therefore, powerless to act in the matter. These facts were not generally understood in the country, and so things were attributed to the Charity Commissioners for which they were not responsible. Then many grievances to which attention had been called during the last 26 years, had been due to Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, under which it became competent for the Commissioners to divert certain monies to educational purposes, "due regard being had to the interests of the classes for whose benefit the foundations affected were intended." These words, to begin with, were rather vague, and several legal decisions had been given relating to Section 30 of the Endowed Schools Act of 1869, by which the action of the Charity Commission was, to a great extent, guided. If the country realised the nature of those decisions and the language of the section, the objections which were sometimes raised would not be raised so acutely and with so much emphasis as was sometimes the case. There was also another instance of the way in which the Commissioners were handicapped, not so much by reason of their own shortcomings as by the duties imposed upon them by statute. But as so many instances were given in the evidence before the Committee he would not pursue the matter further. The unpopularity—real or alleged—of the Charity Commission was, no doubt, due partly to the limits and duties imposed upon them by statute. But it was also due to the fact that the Charity Commission was not responsible, in any real or effective sense, to Parliament through a Minister of State. In this connection the seconder of the Motion entered into the history of the office of the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner, who was sometimes (but erroneously) supposed to be responsible in that House for the doings of the Charity Commission. A glance, however, at the history of that office showed clearly that the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner was not responsible in any real sense of the word. In the first place, he was one only of a considerable number on the board of the Commission, and was therefore apt to be outvoted when questions arose in regard to which a difference of opinion was found to exist. So, in regard to those questions, he could not be said to be responsible at all. But the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner could not be said to be responsible even where he was in agreement with others, because, the proceedings at the meetings of the board being confidential, it was absolutely impossible for him to say, either in the House of Commons or elsewhere, what were the questions on which he agreed to disagree. This showed the anomaly of the position of Parliamentary Charity Commissioner as it was now.

He was not responsible in any proper or true sense for the proceedings of the Commission. Besides, although no doubt in many instances he might be able to influence the decisions of the Commission, he was not a Member of the Government or able to reflect on the Commission the opinion of the Government of the day. The Parliamentary Charity Commissioner was not acquainted with the mind of the Government on any particular matter, and it was impossible for him to convey it to the Commission. The position of a Parliamentary Charity Commissioner was very much like what was known at the Foreign Office as a "buffer State." He stood between Parliament and the Charity Commission, but was not responsible to the one or for the other. That had been seen again and again in the history of the office during the last 30 or 40 years. The seconder of the Motion, although quite correct in the greater part of what he said as to the past history of the office, was not absolutely so as to the opinions he attributed to Mr. Lowe. It was a fact that the first Parliamentary Charity Commissioner was Sir George Grey. His successor was Lord John Russell, who combined with it the office of Lord Privy Seal. From the time of Lord John Russell until 1887 it was held by the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education. But Mr. Lowe did not express the opinion which was ascribed to him.

*Mr. HARRY LAWSON said, he did not attribute any special opinion to Mr. Lowe, but said he was well acquainted with the work of the Commission.

*Mr. F. S. STEVENSON pointed out that Mr. Lowe, in the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission (Vol. IV., pp. 629 and 639), said :—

> "The Parliamentary Charity Commissioner is always liable to attack if anything is done wrong, and though I think there is great disposition in the House to support it in any reasonable way, yet, were it to set itself to work out any crochet or to take any course contrary to the enlightened opinion of the country, it would be very soon pulled up. . . . It would immediately be made the subject of attack in the House, the thing would be called attention to, and if a strong expression of feeling were made I have no doubt that the course of the Commission would be altered. There is not the same difficulty and delicacy in altering the course of a body like the Charity Commission as there is in altering the course of a judicial officer like the Lord Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor, on whose decisions the property of mankind depends, the Charity Commission being a body administrative and ancillary, and therefore more flexible. . . . I think it is entitled to the merit of being a sort of judicial discovery."

The object of the amendment was to assert that certain legal difficulties existed in the way of substituting an arrangement under which the Charity Commission could be truly and properly responsible to Parliament; but upon those difficulties undue and exaggerated emphasis had been laid. Almost every Government department had some legal work to perform; some did it by their own legal advisers and others by different methods. Much of the work done by the Local Government Board was in respect of surcharges and disallowances; it might be described as being work of a judicial character, but no serious difficulty had arisen with regard to the way in which they did it: there had been no imputation of partiality, and there had been no accusation that they had been actuated by political prejudice. It had been argued that, after all, the judicial work done by the Charity Commission stood on a different footing from that of other departments, because there was an appeal to the Court of Chancery against schemes under the Charitable Trusts Act, and to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council against schemes under the Endowed Schools Act. But, after all, what did that argument amount to? Was it an argument against transferring these powers to a responsible Minister? It seemed to him to be rather an argument in favour of retaining the power of appeal on legal points if the other powers were transferred. If the hon. Member opposite had urged that, perhaps his views would not be so strongly opposed; but the argument had been pressed to the extent of urging that the existence of these judicial powers rendered impossible the transfer of the powers of the Charity Commission to a responsible Minister. In view of the fact that the judicial work of the Commission was probably less than the administrative, the argument was not so strong as it might have been if it had been urged with a different moral. It would be admitted that the case of the Endowed Schools Act stood on a different footing from the Charitable Trusts Act, that it would be simpler and easier to transfer the endowed schools work than it would be to transfer the charitable trusts work; but the two sides were inextricably interwoven one with the other. There were constant intercourse and cross reference between the two sides, and if you were to transfer the endowed schools work to the Education Department, it would be impossible in practice to leave the charitable trusts work exactly in the position in which it stands now. The exact way in which the matter could be dealt with was not expressed in the Resolution, and he supposed that for the present it might be left an open question. A few months ago he submitted to the Royal Commission on Secondary Education a scheme by which the result could be achieved; but, as the memorandum had not yet been printed, he could not respectfully refer to it in detail, although he might indicate the main points. Assuming the Endowed Schools Commissioners to be placed in a relation to the Education Department similar to that of the Board of Inland Revenue to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the question arose what was to become of the Charitable Trusts side. It would be found possible, and, perhaps, desirable, to reduce the number of Commissioners under the Charitable Trusts Act from three to two, with the addition of an *ex-officio* element representing the Education Department, and possibly the Local Government Board, but so as to give to the Education Department a predominant voice. When Mr. Forster was Vice President of the Committee of Council he declined to sit at the meetings of the Charity Commission because it was anomalous that, as a Commissioner who might be overruled by his colleagues, he should take part in the preparation of schemes of which as Minister he might have to express approval or disapproval. The hon. Member for Cumberland (Mr. J. W. Lowther), the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir S. Northcote), and himself had occupied the position of Commissioners without being Members of the Government; but experience had shown that a Parliamentary Charity Commissioner, whether a Member of the Government or not, did not occupy a position which could in any sense be called responsible, and he was unable to explain the views of the Commission with any sense of responsibility. He knew what was going on; he could shed a certain amount of light as to the grounds on which certain decisions had been arrived at; but it was impossible for him to state that certain decisions had been arrived at by agreement and to take on his own shoulders the responsibility for them. If that difficulty arose with respect to Charities generally, it did so specially with regard to schemes under the Endowed Schools Act, because it was not only the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner who was affected, but also the Vice President of the Committee of Council. There was dual control, and no one knew exactly who was responsible. As he read the statute, the Charity Commmissioners were responsible for a scheme until it left their hands and went to the Education Department; then the Vice President was responsible for it until it received the Royal Assent. There was no difficulty if the Vice President agreed with a scheme in its entirety, but if he disagreed with part of it it was certain on whom responsibility would devolve. If a scheme had involved a good deal of trouble, and the obtaining of many consents, he would probably sink his objections rather than send the scheme back to the Commission. Thus when a scheme came before the House after midnight it was impossible to know who was responsible for it. If there were added to the Commission an *ex-officio* element representing in the main the Education Department, so as to give it a predominant voice, the argument urged by Mr. Forster would be no longer valid. In this way the transference of the endowed school business presented small difficulty; but the task of dealing with charitable trusts was of a graver kind. The two sides were so closely connected with one another that it would be very difficult, indeed, to separate them altogether, or even to make any serious difference in their treatment. The question arose whether, in the closer arrangements that had sprung up in consequence of recent legislation between the Charitable Trusts side and the Local Government Board, it would not be desirable in some way to introduce a somewhat similar representation of the Local Government Board. Of this he was convinced—that some change was needed, because the difficulties under which the Charity Commission laboured, and the aspersions to which they were often unjustly exposed, were due, not only to limitation of their power by statute, but were due also, to a great extent, to a system under which there was no real responsibility, which worked unfairly to all concerned. In this anomalous situation, so clearly indicating the necessity for a change which would give greater, more direct, and more effective responsibility to Parliament, he certainly would give his support to the Motion.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, that the hon. Member for Rye had attempted to explain the unpopularity of the Charity Commissioners. The real reasons of the unpopularity—which was apart from the personal respect and esteem in which they were held—were two. In the first place, in their schemes they took little or no notice of the wishes of the localities, and in the second place, their policy had always been to frame schemes which resulted in the spoliation of the poor for the benefit of the well-to-do classes. In certain villages their very name had become a perfect terror. The evil was more in the administration than in the state of the law. For example, before free education was established, the policy of the Commission was always to take away the boon of free education where it was enjoyed, and to impose fees. The poor might thank the wisdom of the men who set limits to the interference of the Commissioners, for, but for those limits, few of the Charities directly affecting the poor would now remain. The hon. Member for Exeter had put a meaning to the Motion of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division which he could not accept. If there was to be a Minister to manage all Charities, and that Minister was to be an Educational Minister, then he thought the proposal a bad one; for the Educational Department had already swallowed up, for the benefit of middle-class education, enormous sums belonging to the poor. The hon. Member for Exeter also declared that it was the intention of hon. Gentlemen who supported the Motion to have an Intermediate Education Bill, like that which had been passed for Wales. If such a Bill ever came before the House, it would receive his most strenuous opposition. The schemes under the Welsh Act were based to a large extent, on the spoilation of the charities of the poor. The Cardiff College Scheme, for example, took £1,300 left directly for the poor of Cardiff. He was glad that this Motion had been brought forward, for anything which ventilated the policy and action of the Charity Commission was to be desired. But, at present, this question was non-political, and he wished to keep it so. If his hon. Friend had stopped at the words "Parliamentary control," he should have been better pleased with his Motion. He was quite with his hon. Friend in his desire for a re-organisation and reconstitution of the Charity Commission, which was, at present, independent of Parliament and the public. In fact the Commissioners had no masters but themselves. He was in favour of Parliamentary control; but it was all a question of method. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had brought forward the change of the Poor Law in 1847; but the two cases were not parallel. When the change in regard to the Poor Law was made there was simultaneously created one of the greatest engines of local administration ever seen. If this proposal were to be followed by a Bill he should like to know what statutory reforms were to be introduced; because, simply to give a Minister full power in respect of charities, without certain reforms, would be to jump from the frying-pan into the fire. As to the Select Committee, on which he had served, nearly the whole of the evidence given before it was official evidence, and the people generally, who after all were mostly interested, were not represented. Then, through the energy of the Chairman, the Report was adopted in two sittings—rather quick work. In the most able draft Report of the Chairman, the proposal was merely to have one Minister for Charities connected with the Endowed Schools Act. It was the Motion of the hon. Member for Dewsbury to give to a single Minister power over all the Charities, and that Motion was carried by a majority of one. He himself gave evidence before the Committee, but although he was strongly in sympathy with the objects of his hon. Friend, he strictly guarded himself from agreeing to the idea of putting all Charities under the head of one Department of the State. His reasons were that he did not wish the administration of Charities to become a political or Party question; and he did not wish to increase the centralisation which already existed with regard to these Charities. His hon. Friend had referred to a reduction in the Estimates moved by him in September, 1893, and supported by the right hon. Members for West Bristol and West Birmingham. But that reduction was not moved in any way with the object of the Motion now before the House. It was simply a protest against the manner in which the poorer classes were despoiled by the Charity Commission. And that was the only point of view for which he would consent to consider a change in the administration of Charities. The question was, How could the spoliation of the poor be stopped, and, if possible, that which had been taken away restored? There was a widely held opinion among hon. Members that doles would be much better employed for educational and other purposes. But that was not the opinion of the poor people themselves. It was easy for people who were never hungry nor cold to speak contemptuously of doles. In respect to the Methwold Charities, which were doles, and with which the Commission now dealt, the clergyman had written to him the following letter:—

> "It seems to me on a piece with the sickening nonsense of telling the poor man that he is ill-conditioned, when he too, like ourselves, wants something in the way of amusement. That he must work all day, keep at home in the evening, and if he have anything coming to him in this way beyond what he earns, he must hand it over to other people and let them tell him how to spend it."

If the clergymen in other parishes would take such a sensible view of the rights of the poorer people they would find it very popular. The hon. Member for Eye referred to the unpopularity of the Charity Commissioners. The other day there was a meeting in the City in respect to the opening of a large hall, with a reference library of 10,000 volumes and a lending library of 50,000 volumes. One of the speakers said:—

> "It is a very difficult task to convert old women's flannel petticoats into a specious library."

It ought not to be easy; it ought to be impossible. It was all very well for those who were never cold or hungry to talk about turning coals and blankets into specious halls. When everyone was well-fed and clad they might talk about schemes of higher education, but until then the House ought not to interfere with what the poor people thought was good for themselves, and what, at any rate, belonged to them. What would be said if interference were suggested with what belonged to any other class? If the higher classes had some endowments which the mass of the people thought were not being put to the best uses, would it be right that those endowments should be taken away? He knew it was said that poor people crowded into the parishes in which doles existed. Rich people did very much the same thing. If one went to Birmingham or Bedford he would find the well-to-do classes crowding into those places in order to get an education worth, perhaps, £50 a year, for £6. What he suggested was that the initiation of all schemes should be in the hands of the County Councils, which were bodies far more capable of dealing with local affairs than the Imperial Parliament. Of course, they would have to consult the parishes affected, and there would have to be statutory safeguards to prevent them diverting Charities from the original intention of the founders. There was one phase of the question which was worthy of notice. At present, when a charity scheme came before the House, it was treated in a non-party manner, that was to say there was no chance of turning out a Government by voting against it. His hon. Friend the

Member for the Rushcliffe Division referred to the Herefordshire scheme which was before the House a short time ago. That was a scheme under which it was proposed to take about £11,000—endowments belonging to the poor—that it might eventually go to higher education. It was a non-party scheme, and was defeated. But there was a more important case. A few years ago the Charity Commissioners had before them a scheme for devoting the Dauntsey Charities, which amounted to £60,000, to higher and middle class education. A Conservative Government was in power at the time, and the late Mr. W. H. Smith would not agree to the scheme. So soon as he understood the scheme, he said, "No; it was not just to the poor," and he consented to have it defeated, and it was defeated in the House of Lords. Had that scheme been brought in by a responsible Minister it would have gone through, because the vote would have been regarded as a party vote. The hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division was in favour of following precedent. A precedent was to be found in the way in which commons were regulated. For 20 years past a Select Committee had been appointed each year to deal with the regulation of commons, and latterly it had acted in conjunction with the Board of Agriculture. During those 20 years only one scheme had been rejected by the House. It might be said that the work would be too heavy; but surely that would not be the case. At present the average number of schemes dealt with annually by the Charity Commissioners was about 200. Many of the schemes were very simple and their consideration would occupy little time. Each member of the House would have a copy of a scheme, and when a scheme had once passed the ordeal of initiation by a County Council, in consultation with the Charity Commission, he apprehended there would be very little difficulty in the Select Committee or in the House, when the Scheme came down to it. The Report of the Schools Inquiry Committee had been referred to. That Committee had been rightly described as a most capable body. What did they say? They reported:—

> "In assigning to different schools their different tasks, the character of the population, the chief occupations — agriculture, mining, or commercial—the teaching that seems most in demand—these considerations, as it seems to us, should be allowed to have their proper weight."

Again, they said:—

> "The duty of framing schemes should not rest chiefly with the Charity Commissioners but with Provincial Assemblies. They will be the best judges of local needs, and their consent will be sufficient."

In other words, they recommended that a body which corresponded with the County Council should initiate a Scheme, and they did so on the ground that it was far better acquainted with localities than a central authority could be. In his opinion, it was in that direction that a true remedy lay. If schemes were initiated by the County Councils, in consultation with the Charity Commission, and then submitted to a Committee of the House of Commons, he thought the interests of the poorer classes would be well attended to. Members of the House would know what they were doing when they were dealing with Charities, and such a system would prevent excessive centralisation and party struggles in connection with Charities. Without some amendment of the present Acts it was almost impossible to prevent putting great hardships on the poorer classes. For instance, Clause 30 enabled the Commissioners, or those acting for the Commissioners, to take non-educational Charities and devote them to educational purposes. That power had been the means of taking tens of thousands of pounds away from the poorer classes for the benefit of the well-to-do. Clause 29 in its operation had had the same damaging effect. His contention was that all endowments left for the education of the poor should be kept for them, notwithstanding that the State in its wisdom had provided education from other sources. He hoped, therefore, the £50 limit would be retained until those alterations had been made. The Charity Commission had the administration of the Allotments Act of 1882; but as it was not possible for any central body to know the wants of each particular district, they had made many mistakes in the administration of that Act, and with the best intentions, no doubt, had done harm very frequently to the agricultural labourers of several districts. The Charity Commission had, for instance, encouraged the sale of poors' land, which, thereby, had passed away altogether from the poorer classes. Millions of real property had been treated in this objectionable manner. He thought the County Council should have those matters under their jurisdiction. He was, therefore, thoroughly in favour of the object his hon. Friend the Member for Rushcliffe had in view; but the control should be Parliamentary control, and not party control. What he desired was, that when a scheme came under the consideration of Parliament, the Government should not feel that its existence depended on the passing of the scheme. He wanted every scheme to be left an open question, on which every Member of the House might vote according to his judgment, uninfluenced by Party considerations. But he was afraid that if a responsible Minister brought in a scheme, however bad, Party exigencies would be said to render its passing necessary. The rights of the poor had already been considerably bartered away, but what remained of them should be safeguarded by Parliament; and he trusted that in the consideration of all future social legislation referring to these Charities and Endowments, the aim of Parliament would be, not, as in years past, to extend those benefits to the middle classes, and even to the upper classes, but to secure them for the enjoyment of the poor, who most needed them, and for whom they were really intended.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) said, that after having listened carefully to the speech of the right hon. Member for Bordesley, he was still in doubt as to whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to vote for the Motion or for the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman, at any rate, had damned with faint praise the proposal of the hon. Member for Rushcliffe.

Mr. COLLINGS said he was not going to vote for the Motion, on the sole ground that it was proposed to subject the work of the Charity Commissioners to a single Minister.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER was glad to have obtained from the right hon. Gentleman that statement, which was certain to carry considerable weight, owing to the great authority with which the right hon. Gentleman spoke on this subject. The hon. Member for Rushcliffe, in moving the Motion, was careful to say that the Minister of State to whom he proposed to give control of the work of the Charity Commissioners need not necessarily be the Minister of Education. But the hon. Gentleman could hardly maintain that position, for the members of the Select Committee who passed the Report definitely committed themselves to the statement that—

> "After careful consideration of the whole matter they had come to the conclusion that the control of Endowments should be added to the functions of the new Minister of Education."

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS: Of course, the House is only bound to determine the Motion before it.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER said, the House was asked to take action upon the Report of a Committee which reported in favour of the Minister of Education being placed in charge of endowments, and, therefore, if they passed the Motion, they might make up their minds that the Minister to whom this new function would be given would be the Minister of

Education. He thought it important that hon. Members should keep clearly before them the fact that the Charity Commission had two totally different and separate jurisdictions. One was the administration of charitable trusts, and the other the administration of endowed schools. In the administration of charitable trusts the Charity Commission were confined within the four corners of the law as it was laid down from time to time by the Courts of Chancery; but under of the Endowed Schools Acts they could, in dealing with endowed schools, go wholly and entirely beyond any law in regard to charitable trusts. He agreed with the hon. Member for Eye that any unpopularity which attached to the Charity Commission was due in a great measure to the action which was forced upon them by Parliament under the Endowed Schools Acts. He therefore thought it only right that the action of the Charity Commission under the Endowed Schools Acts, when they went beyond the ordinary law, should be reviewed by Parliament; but he strongly held that the Chancery Court was the proper place for appeals from the jurisdiction of the Charity Commission in all matters relating to charitable trusts, as, indeed, Parliament had declared over and over again, and no later than in the recent Parish Councils Act. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister of Education, in his evidence before the Select Committee, referred to the difficulty in which he stood in regard to responsibility for schemes which came from the Charity Commission. The right hon. Gentleman said that though he wrote "approved" on those schemes, he occasionally felt uncomfortable because he did not quite approve of some of their contents. But that difficulty appeared to be more of a theoretical than of a practical character, for when cross-examined the right hon. Gentleman admitted that there had been only two instances in which any friction had occurred between him and the Charity Commission, and those cases were not under the Endowed Schools Act at all, but under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act. Other Gentlemen besides the right hon. Gentleman had had to administer these Acts, and had occupied the same position that he now occupied, and it was a singular fact that no gentleman who had filled the position of vice-president, except the right hon. Gentleman himself, was called before the Committee of last year. There were several gentlemen who had acted as vice-president, both in this and the other House, and who had had to administer these Acts, and if these difficulties had arisen, surely they would have had something to say about them. In the other House there were Lord Harrowby, Lord Knutsford, and Lord Playfair, who had all occupied the same position as the right hon. Gentleman, whilst in this House there were the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord G. Hamilton), the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), and his right hon. Friend the Member for one of the divisions of Kent (Sir W. Hart-Dyke). If any of these gentlemen had experienced any difficulties they could have come before the Committee and stated what those difficulties were. From the fact that no other Gentleman who had been vice-president was called before the Committee, and that there were only two cases in which these difficulties assumed an acute form, he said they might fairly come to the conclusion that the difficulties were of a theoretical, and not of a practical character. He understood the position of the right hon. Gentleman thoroughly. He was a great educationalist, anxious to advance the interests of education, and in doing so, and while seeking to control the endowed schools work of the Charity Commission, he was also apparently forced by the terms of this Motion to absorb and control the Charitable Trusts work of the Commission. So much had been said in the discussion upon the character and the aspect of the judicial work of the Charity Commission carried out under their Charitable Trusts jurisdiction, that he felt he should not be entitled to weary the House by a repetition of what had been said. Almost the last witness who was called before the Committee was Lord Davey, who gave by far the most cogent and valuable evidence adduced before it. Strangely enough, the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division had ignored that evidence. In the Report of the Committee the objections and difficulties which Lord Davey raised were never met, and hardly even alluded to. His Lordship pointed out that the Charity Commission, having in many cases to decide judicially upon questions like the interpretation of legal instruments, stood in a totally different position to any other Government Department, its work being largely judicial. That evidence was never contradicted, it was simply ignored. It was a difficulty. It was not met, but it was passed by. He did not know what had been going on in the Commission now sitting on the subject of Secondary Education, but if any good was to come out of the inquiry that Commission would have to deal with these difficulties in a very different frame of mind to that which the Committee of last year brought to bear upon them. Why should Charities which were not of an educational nature be placed under the Education Minister? Why, for example, should Charities for the repair of roads and bridges be administered by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, or by the "ideal minister"? Such charities would naturally come under the Minister for Agriculture. There were many charities for the relief of rates, the maintenance of alms-houses, pensions, doles, and so forth, and why should they be administered by the Minister of Education? Their proper place, surely, would be under the Local Government Board if they were going to be assigned to any Minister of State at all. There were charities for nursing, medical attendance, and so on, which, if they were to have a Minister to take charge of them, should properly go, he supposed, to the Privy Council. Was it the case that those who were anxious to place these Charities under an Education Minister were desirous of converting them into educational Charities? He thought they should probably find that the strong educationalists were those who would be warmly in favour of the Education Minister having charge of these Charities. There was certainly a very significant Amendment moved during the deliberations of the Committee by the hon. Member for Tunbridge, who desired to add to the end of paragraph 10 these words—

> "For carrying out as far as possible the intention of the founders of the Charities,"

And all the Members of the Liberal Party who were on the Committee voted against the Amendment.

*MR. HARRY LAWSON: Because the words were meaningless and unnecessary.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER remarked, that that was not the view he and his friends took. It was a somewhat striking circumstance that they had all these strong educationalists anxious to get hold of all Charities and place them under the Minister of Education. The inevitable tendency of the Department over which the ideal Minister would preside would be to convert these Charities to such a purpose.

> "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds,
> Makes ill deeds done,"

And when this new ideal Educational Minister had all the machinery ready to hand it was very likely that some of these eleemosynary and other Charities would be used for educational purposes.

In addition to the Committee which sat upon this matter there was an inquiry made by the Treasury under the able presidency a public servant whose death they were to-day lamenting—a public servant whose place it would be difficult to fill, and who had devoted the best years of his life unreservedly to the work of the public. He alluded to Sir Robert Hamilton, who was Chairman of the Inquiry which sat at the Treasury to consider this very matter. He had asked already, and he asked again, to see Sir Robert Hamilton's Report. There was nothing confidential about the question, he had no knowledge officially of what was in the Report, but he had knowledge that the Inquiry sat, for he (Mr. Lowther) was called before it to give evidence. He thought it would be extremely useful in considering this question that they should, at all events, have the views of the Treasury, and not of the Education Department alone. In framing schemes dealing with endowments there were involved in the initial stages considerations not of educational policy, but of pure law. The first thing that had to be considered was whether the endowment was an educational endowment or not; whether the school was an excepted school in the Act or not; whether a certain interest was or was not a vested interest; and whether the endowment was religious or not. All these were questions of pure law which should be decided by a legal or *quasi* legal tribunal. When they had once decided that, he was perfectly ready to grant that the building up of a scheme upon these foundations being a question entirely of educational policy should rest with the Education Department. That was the way in which things were at present worked in regard to charities for elementary education. He maintained that it was absolutely necessary to keep the legal part of the work distinct from mere questions of educational policy, and for these reasons, unless the hon. Member who moved the Motion would add words to make it clear that it was confined to educational matters, he should support the hon. Member for Tonbridge in his Amendment.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W.R., Holderness) observed that the question which had been raised had been debated in a clear and sensible way and without any unnecessary introduction of a Party spirit. The matter, of course, was a serious one, for the Charity Commission had in some form, direct or indirect, very large funds in its charge—funds which had been largely increasing, too, of late. The total funds which it had under its charge exceeded three millions annually, of which about one-and-a-half million was eleemosynary and one million was educational, while the remaining half-million belonged to general purposes of different kinds. The Report of the Charity Commission just circulated showed that their work, at any rate, had not been of a character to in any way impede the flow of donations by charitable founders. It was often said that if Parliament did this or that it would prevent people from giving money to charitable purposes in future. It was quite clear that for the last 20 years that had not been the case at all. On the contrary, the Commissioners said it seemed as if the period in which we now lived was likely to be the richest period in the way of charitable donations we had had since the Reformation. Taking charities only of a thousand pounds and upwards given to various purposes—educational, charitable, and miscellaneous—they amounted in the last 20 years to no less than eight million pounds sterling. From the point of view of the large sums involved, therefore, great responsibility devolved upon the Commission. And they could all agree that in a great deal of its work since 1853 the Commission had been of the highest possible public service. Before that date there was much expense in managing the trusts and much litigation in connection with the Charities. By the legislation which began in 1853 the Charity Commission had been able to revise, to supervise, in some respects to restrict, and generally to bring the Charities into reasonable harmony with the public opinion of the day. They had, it was true, in the opinion of many persons, gone somewhat further than they should have done in way of diverting that which was meant for the poor to the benefit of the middle classes. He thought that policy had occasionally been carried somewhat too far. For his part, he constantly regretted the admitted unpopularity of the Charity Commission. He had, if he might say so, inherited a special interest in the Charity Commission, and especially in the Endowed Schools Commission, for his father was a member of the Schools Inquiry Commission, which had been alluded to in the House in terms of commendation. That unpopularity, be the reasons what they might, had led to considerable want of force in the Charity Commission, and a considerable want of support for the work of the Charity Commission in this House. "Our position," Sir H. Longley said in his evidence, "is unique. We have not at our head a political chief to defend our policy, or to help us in getting means to do our work." Some hon. Members were in favour of removing the £50 limit, and they seemed to think that was quite an easy thing to do. Now, efforts were made some years ago to do that; the matter was referred to a Select Committee, and a Bill was subsequently introduced. What was the fate of that Bill? The rejection of the Bill was Moved by the hon. Member for South Islington, and Seconded by the Conservative Member for Norwich, and those who supported the rejection included the gallant Member for South-East Essex, one of the hon. Members for Preston, and his right hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. That kind of opposition, coming from different quarters, to such a small Bill did not look promising, and would not look promising again, he ventured to say, if it were brought into the House to-morrow. That was only a single instance of the way in which Charity Commission Bills, not fathered by any responsible Minister, got treated in this House; and he had very little hope of any of those amending proposals which he and others would like to see carried into law. In speaking of the work of the Charity Commission he could not but notice the labours in Wales of the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Bruce, son of the late Lord Aberdare He thought the way he did his most difficult and delicate work on the joint committees, on which sat Churchmen and Nonconformists, and men differing in politics, and remembering that there was nevertheless remarkable unanimity of action by those Committees, was an immense credit to the Assistant Commissioner. But, in the general result, it must be admitted that there were great hindrances and great unwillingness to give the Charity Commission further powers so long as its present constitution remained. He was totally ignorant of a considerable portion of the work of the Charity Commission, but on the side of the Endowed Schools Act, of course, he had some direct responsibility. It was perfectly true that in his evidence before the Select Committee, when he was asked in how many cases the Charity Commission had in any way opposed the Education Department, he said, "Only two." But anybody who read his evidence fairly would see that what he had to say went much further than this. It was to this effect. He blamed nobody for it—that all the earlier stages which brought a scheme into the form of a scheme were carried through without any knowledge on his part whatever, and that

that was not the original intention of Mr. Forster in the Act of 1869. Historical events had changed all that. The result was that schemes came before him about which he knew nothing. When he approved of a Bill or anything else arising in his own department, he approved of something of which he was cognisant of every stage, but when he approved a Charity Commission scheme he gave his approval in a very different sense. He was asked more than once on the Committee :—

> "Do you not take the responsibility of approving those schemes? Do you not feel bound to defend them when they come into the House of Commons?"

He took the responsibility. He felt considerable difficulty sometimes in defending a scheme, but if he were pressed on the point of law, it was clear that he had the responsibility of approval, and as far as possible he had the responsibility of condemning. The only other course open to the Minister of Education was to reject them altogether. He had lately had three important schemes under his consideration. That for Hereford was, he believed, at first approved of by the hon. Member for Hereford, and yet he had come down to that House and opposed it, with the result that the Government were bound to reject it. Then there was the Hackney scheme, which was a very important scheme. With regard to the third scheme, whereby it was proposed to divert certain sums of money from charitable trusts to educational purposes, he had carefully considered the proposal, and he came to the conclusion that it would not pass that House, and therefore he had stated that the Education Department could not accept the scheme. The fact was that the Charity Commissioners had these schemes under their consideration for many months and then passed them over to the Minister of Education, who had not the means of knowledge which they possessed with regard to them, but was called upon to defend them in that House. In his opinion such a system was most cumbrous and most unsatisfactory, and it ought to be considerably altered. It had been suggested in the course of the Debate that if the proposal embodied in the motion before the House were adopted it would have the result of importing Party politics into the question, which would be a great disadvantage in dealing with matters so difficult and so delicate as Charities. All he could say was that, when it was considered that Ministers of the day had already to discharge duties equally difficult and delicate, he did not think that there was much force in the argument. Let them take the administration of Ireland, for instance. Were not the duties which a Minister had to discharge in that respect both difficult and delicate? And yet it had never been proposed to withdraw those duties from the Minister and to hand them over to an irresponsible non-political body. In fact, all experience in that House pointed the other way, and the tendency was to hold some Minister responsible for the control of all public bodies. On the whole, he thought that some responsible Minister ought to have the control of all the matters which were at present administered by the Charity Commissioners. The endowed schools portion of the Commissioners' work was now under the charge of a sub-Commission, the chief of which was chosen by the Ministry of the day, and who was therefore of the same politics as they were. The Charity Commissioners knew more about charity work than the Minister of Education; but of course they could not take upon themselves Ministerial responsibility, and it remained for the Government, who had no direct relations with the Charity Commissioners, to make such defence for their action as they could. Such a form of Ministerial responsibility was, after all, discharged in a very perfunctory way, and the whole present system, in his opinion, was most unsatisfactory. It had been urged that it would be extremely difficult to separate the educational from the non-educational charities, but he believed that in the future some means would be found whereby that difficulty might be met. The Government thought that the best way to strengthen the Commission and to give it force, which it certainly needed both for improving its procedure and for securing adequate defence in that House for its proposals, was that which was advocated by the Mover of the Amendment. The Government, therefore, were perfectly ready to support a proposal the principle of which they regarded as a sound one. The working out of the scheme of reconstruction would, no doubt, be a matter of very considerable difficulty, but, sooner or later, there must be real Ministerial responsibility. The view of the Government was that a change such as that foreshadowed in the Motion would not lead to increased partisanship or to political bias, but that it would strengthen that which was weak, that it would enable long-desired legislation for improving the working of the Commission to be passed, that it would make it possible for some one in the House of Commons to speak with real authority on behalf of the Commissioners, and that it would impart to the work of the Commission more effectiveness and real efficiency.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) thought that the time which the hon. Gentleman opposite had chosen for raising this question was somewhat inopportune, because a very valuable Report bearing upon the subject would shortly be presented, and he thought that it would be most inadvisable for the House to come to any conclusion in connection with the matter until it had that Report before it. As one of the Governors of the Bradford Grammar School, which was the first that had been dealt with under a scheme of the Endowed Schools Commission, he could bear testimony to the success which had attended the carrying that scheme into effect. He agreed that it was not wise to dissociate the administration of educational from that of other endowments. In one case which he knew, the old trustees were entrusted with funds partly for eleemosynary purposes and partly for educational purposes. There had been a separation, and that separation had worked much mischief. It would not be easy to harmonise the discord which now existed in that instance, but he trusted that by the exercise of friendly feeling the discord would be removed. Reference had been made to the last Report of the Commissioners, and to the large sums given since 1878. In Manchester, for example, a charity of £100,000 had been given for education; in Sheffield £20,000 had been given to Firth College, which was doing such valuable work; at Egham the Holloway College, which was gradually becoming a valuable institution, had been endowed with £300,000; and there was the Berridge charity of £200,000 for the furtherance of education in economic and sanitary science. There had been, in addition, large charities in other parts of the kingdom. There was a disposition at this moment to bring these charities more under the control of the House of Commons, but he doubted whether a disposition of that kind prevailed in other countries. In the United States the feeling was rather to place charities outside political struggles, and to protect them in the performance of their functions from the changing currents of passing political opinion. Many statutes passed in the United States and Canada put charities beyond the immediate control of the Executive. Many charitable institutions being founded in the same way as corporations were founded, and being regulated by statute, could not be altered by any other authority than that of Parliament itself. This showed that, although the influence of public opinion must always be of great value, charitable institutions sometimes flourished best when separated from political life. The enormous amount of work done by the Charity Commissioners had, perhaps, not been dwelt upon sufficiently in that Debate. From 1861 to 1893 the number of orders issued was no less than 12,311. The sum produced by sales in 10 years was £2,259,379; the number of charities under the Commissioners' control was 60,000, and the annual increase in the number of such charities was nearly 500. These figures showed that this was work of an executive character which must be committed to some subordinate authority, and which could not be performed under the minute and detailed supervision of a Parliamentary assembly. The attitude of the House of Commons in respect of charities ought to be much the same as its attitude in respect of the Courts of Law. While they entrusted to the Judges the interpretation of the law, they altered that law when it was no longer in harmony with public opinion, or in accord with the principles of general utility. In the same way, in the case of charities, that House ought to exercise a general authority, but the exercise of a detailed and minute authority was beyond the competence of Parliament; and if Parliament were to attempt to interfere in that way the result would inevitably be disappointing. The Charity Commissioners had been accused of not giving sufficient effect to the recommendations of Committees, with regard to the extension of the representative principle as applied to governors. It should be remembered, however, that others besides governors chosen directly by the people represented them equally well. There were the *ex-officio* governors, who were Chairmen of Boards of Guardians and of Local Boards, Overseers, and Churchwardens. These were as much representative of popular opinion as the governors described in the official returns as being wholly and entirely representative. He maintained that the Commission had acted largely on the recommendations made to them to apply the principle of representation. As things were, Parliament exercised considerable control over the Commission. There was control when the Estimates were before the House; there was control when the representatives of the Commission in that House were called upon to vindicate its action in regard to particular schemes, and there was control when the Vice President of the Council defended the action of the Commission generally. He thought that a time would come when some changes would have to be made, but that time was not yet. When the time for dealing with the question should arrive, he thought they would find it expedient to delegate. These were the days of delegation. Life was so complicated; interests were so numerous, conflicting, and vast, that subordinate authorities were increasingly called into action, not merely for the purpose of deliberation, but also to deal with problems as they arose. Whatever might be the nature of the body charged in the future with the administration of charities, it would have to be a body exercising considerable independence, and not liable to have its decisions reversed by hasty votes in that House. He believed that the experience gained in the course of time, and the maturing of public opinion would in the end lead to the solution of existing difficulties, and so to the advancement of the great cause of public education.

The SPEAKER then retired for the usual interval.

[On the return of Mr. SPEAKER, notice being taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,]

The House adjourned at a Quarter before Nine o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Wednesday, 24th April 1895.*

Mr. Speaker took the Chair at Twelve of the clock, and a House was made Twenty minutes later.

### LIQUOR TRAFFIC BILLS.

The Orders for Second Reading of the Liquor Traffic Local Veto (England) Bill, and the Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill were postponed till Tuesday, May 28th.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### TRAMWAYS (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

*MR. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) Moved the Second Reading of this Bill, which he said was to a large extent non-contentious in its character. He reminded the House that the Act of 1870, in the most trenchant terms, prohibited municipalities and local authorities from working tramways. That prohibition having been found to be too cramping, too much against the public opinion of the day, the House of Commons in March 1892 passed Standing Order 171, which, while re-affirming the full meaning and tenour of the Act of 1870 made certain exceptions, by which if a local authority which had constructed or acquired a tramway were unable to demise the tramway, a license might be granted to the local authority to work such tramway; provided, however, that if at any time during such working by the local authority any company offered to take the tramway off the hands of the local authority, on terms approved by the Board of Trade, then the company should be entitled to buy the tramway and work it independently of the corporation. This Bill sought to turn the Standing Order into an Act. When the House considered that corporations like Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham were entrusted with powers to make gas for their communities, and had laid a perfect network of pipes over those great cities, and were authorised to spend millions in bringing water, sometimes across a couple of counties, for the consumption of the inhabitants, the House would not need to be persuaded that the working of a tramway was a mere trifle in comparison with such large undertakings. There were many advantages in tramways being under the control of local authorities. He believed that the very fact of tramways being in public hands tended to equalise rates throughout the area over which they had control, and by averaging the rates many parts of the town became inhabited by reason of the facilities afforded to the inhabitants He did not think the House would hesitate to give the Bill a Second Reading, seeing that its provisions were exceedingly small and limited, and that they were largely similar to Standing Order 171, relating to tramways. He had reason to believe that the Government would have supported a much stronger Bill, and he hoped its provisions would be enlarged in the Committee.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) did not intend to oppose the Second Reading, though he hardly thought the Bill was satisfactory in many of its provisions. The working of tramways by local authorities was a large question which ought to be settled on broad grounds of public policy. Any difficulty that might arise through a tramway being thrown upon the hands of a local authority was met by the existing law, and he did not see the necessity for further legislation to deal with that particular case. The Bill proposed that the Board of Trade should have a general power to grant a licence to a local authority to work any tramway, if, in the opinion of the Board, the local authority was unable to demise or lease the tramway on such terms as would yield them an adequate rent. That provision invested the Board of Trade with a very novel and difficult duty. What were the circumstances the Board of Trade would have to take into account in arriving at a decision as to whether the local authority were unable to dispose of the tramway on such terms as would yield them an adequate rent? And what was the percentage the Board of Trade was to take as an adequate rent? There was nothing in the Bill to guide the Board of Trade in exercising this responsible jurisdiction; and he did not think the Board of Trade would be anxious to have this duty cast upon them without at least some indication of the lines on which they should proceed in discharging it. There was another extraordinary provision in the Bill which he saw the greatest possible difficulty in carrying out. It was proposed that if at any time during the working of the tramway by the local authority any company tendered to take a lease of the tramway and to work the tramway for a period of not less than seven years, the tramway should be given over to them at such rent, and upon such terms and conditions as should be, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, adequate and proper. Here again the discretionary power of the Board of Trade was invoked, without any instructions being given as to the basis upon which the rental should be fixed, or the conditions be imposed. Were fair wages and hours of labour of the men employed to enter into the conditions of the matter? But what, perhaps, was most objectionable in the clause was that "any company" was to have this power of taking over the tramway from the local authority. It was not to be a company established for the purpose. Therefore, it might be an Omnibus Company or a Cab Company in the district who would take up the tramway, not for the purpose of *bonâ fide* working it for the benefit of the community, but for the purpose of crippling it or killing it in order that their own or some other means of transit might be encouraged and fostered. Again, what was to happen in cases where there were two or three tramways of a town in the hands of separate companies? Was the Bill to apply to London and to the other great towns? These were all difficult questions which would have to be more carefully considered in Committee than they appeared to have been in the drafting of the Bill. He was not prepared to say that the law in regard to the powers of local authorities to acquire and lease or work tramways was in a satisfactory state. Indeed, he could not help thinking that some larger legislation on the question was desirable. There were many other important considerations involved in the matter such as the use to which tramways in the hands of local authorities might be put towards relieving the congested condition of large towns like London by enabling the working classes to get from their work in the centre of the towns to houses in the suburbs. He, therefore, sympathised with the object of the Bill. He looked upon the Bill as well-intentioned, but a little crude in its character, but was disposed to give it a Second Reading in order that the House might have an opportunity in Committee of making it a practical measure.

*MR. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that in many respects the Bill was a very peculiar Bill. One peculiarity was that it had a very long preamble. He did not know why it had been thought necessary to put such a long preamble in the Bill. It might have some connection with the fact that the body of the Bill was in great part a reflection of the Standing Orders relating to tramways, but though those provisions might work well in Standing Orders, he did not see how they were to work in the Bill. He would like to know what proof there was of the recital in the preamble that it had been found that local authorities were unable to demise or lease at an adequate rent tramways constructed or acquired by them. If local authorities were unable to lease tramways there was nothing to hinder them from applying to the Board of Trade under the Standing Orders; and if they had not done so he did not see how the process of obtaining leases would be facilitated by the Bill. Clause 5 was a curious provision, for it contained a general repeal of parts of previous Acts without specifying the particular provisions which were thus repealed. Suppose that a local authority desired to put the Bill into operation, and that certain persons desired to oppose the idea of any extension of power being given to the local authority in this direction, it would be quite impossible for such persons to know exactly where they stood. How could they ascertain, for instance, what parts of the existing law were repealed, and what, on account of such repeal, would be the effect of the enactment of this Bill? His next criticism was that the Bill was an enactment in substance and form of what were the provisions in the present Standing Orders. These Standing Orders had been carefully framed with due regard to the putting in motion of the proper department that had to deal with them. What was the objection to proceeding, under the present Standing Order, for the purpose of obtaining a Provisional Order which had to come before Parliament? If extensive powers were given to a local authority, by which they would acquire, and possibly mismanage, the working of the tramways, where was the right of the ratepayer to come in and prevent the carrying out of a disadvantageous scheme? Had the Board of Trade the power to give an opportunity to ratepayers to be heard before any such scheme was carried out, for he saw nothing to this effect in the Bill? Under the present system of procedure in such matters, measures of this kind were required by the Standing Order to be brought on by means of Provisional Orders, the Board of Trade being the department that had to deal with the matter, and interpose where interposition was necessary. By means of the present machinery, the ratepayers had ample opportunity for a proper representation of their views, and for having the question dealt with in the manner they considered best. But it seemed to him that in his opinion, the sole result of the proposed measure would be to substitute irregular, unexplained, and uncertain action on the part of the Board of Trade in future for action that was now properly and regularly enforced by Acts of Parliament, and Provisional Orders passed by the House. They had been told it was intended that local authorities, like the London County Council, should have power to Act under this Bill. He saw by Clause 7, that the expenses of the local authority exercising such power were to be paid out of the local rates. Supposing that the County Council of London would be the authority to put the Bill, when it became an Act, into operation, then he should feel it his duty outside that House to consider how it would affect the subordinate authorities. He happened to be a vestryman in one of the London parishes, and he could say that they, in that particular parish, were by no means satisfied with the administration of the London County Council. He greatly desired that they should do nothing to promote legislation which would weaken the hold a department like the Board of Trade had, upon matters of tramways and similar undertakings. One argument which had been used in support of the Bill was that it would give facilities to artisans who lived a distance from their work to make use of the trams. But suppose the local authorities were to work the tramways on such a footing as to entail a loss, then that loss would fall upon the general body of ratepayers, and they would thus be benefiting one section of the community at the expense of the whole. Those who lived near their work would have to pay a share of the cost which was entailed in enabling those who lived at a distance to take advantage of the tramway service. There was another respect in which the Bill, he felt sure, would fail to satisfy the anticipations of its supporters. The local authorities would only be able to work those tramways which were strictly within the limits of their jurisdiction, and would have no authority over those outside their own boundaries. It might happen that the places to and from which persons desired to travel, were outside the jurisdiction of the local body, and the difficulties which now arose in working a connected system between tramways outside and inside the districts of a local authority were not in any way met by the Bill.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen) said, the Bill was one of a very simple type. The House was no doubt aware that the General Tramways Act of 1870, while it gave powers to local authorities to construct tramways, refused them the power of working tramways. In 1882 the Huddersfield people came to this House and succeeded in obtaining a clause under which special power was given to them to work their tramways in case they were unable to find any company to whom they could lease them, but with a provision that if at any time a company came forward and offered to take the tramways off their hands on certain terms to be approved by the Board of Trade, then the company should be entitled to take the tramways and work them, and the working of them should pass out of the hands of the Corporation. Encouraged by the success of Huddersfield in getting this clause, and subsequently in working the tramway under it, a number of other local authorities in the year succeeding 1882 came to Parliament and endeavoured to get similar powers. Those powers were, he thought, in every instance refused, either in the House of Lords or here, on the ground that they were inconsistent with the general Act, and the Standing Order did not permit them, and that the case of Huddersfield was the exception. It was felt at the same time that it would be better to deal with such cases by Amendment of the Standing Order, and accordingly, in 1892, a Standing Order was passed, No. 171, which provided that although, as a general rule, a tramway made by the local authority was to be offered to a company to work it, still where a local authority was unable to find a company that would work it, then the local authority was to be permitted to do so. At the present time there were 13 local authorities which possessed powers to work their tramways. Of these 13 only four were at present working their tramways besides Glasgow, which was in this peculiar position, that under the Act of 1871 it possessed general powers for working its tramways, and was now exercising those powers in what he believed, upon the balance of evidence, to be a successful manner. Apart from Glasgow, there were Blackpool, Plymouth, Greenock, and Huddersfield, in which the local authorities, possessing the powers, were actually working the tramways. What the Bill before the House proposed was to generalise the Huddersfield clause—that was to say, it was proposed by the Bill to dispense with the necessity of inserting in a Bill brought into this House such a clause as that under which Huddersfield now works its tramways. It proposed to make it part of the general law that upon conditions similar to those laid down in the Huddersfield clause any local authority should have power to work tramways. That was the substance of the proposal, and it was one which was entitled to the favourable consideration of the House. It would not be right that he should discuss the intention his hon. Friend foreshadowed of strengthening the Bill; he had to do with the Bill before the House, which was a Bill simply for generalising the Huddersfield clause. This was not the first time this Session the matter had come before the House. It came up in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, when there was a discussion as to giving power to insert a clause to permit the County Council to work tramways within the Metropolis. The Instruction was affirmed by the majority of the House. He would suggest to his hon. Friend that he would be well advised not to endeavour to take this Bill into Committee until the London Bill came back to this House. The hon. Member for St. Pancras appeared entirely to have misunderstood the Bill; he must have read it in a cursory manner. And as to the criticisms of the hon. Member for Preston, they appeared to be directed to matters which would properly arise in Committee. Under the circumstances, looking at this Bill as they found it, and seeing the very limited scope it would have, and seeing also the desirability of incorporating in the general law a provision which this House was now in the habit of adopting on a particular Bill, he hoped the House would at once assent to the Second Reading of the Bill.

Bill read 2°.

Mr. C. E. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) Moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion agreed to.

## THE SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.), in moving the Second Reading of the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, said, he thought that the best argument he could put forward in support of his Motion was to lay before the House the history of this question. On the 6th May 1876, a Resolution in favour of closing public houses in Ireland on Sunday was carried in that House, in opposition to the views of the

Government of the day by a majority of 56, and in 1877 a Bill founded upon that Resolution was introduced, and referred to a Select Committee of the House. That Select Committee, although nominated by a Government hostile to the principle of the measure affirmed the principle of the Bill, and in 1878 a Bill drawn upon the same lines passed through both Houses of Parliament. In its progress through Committee of that House it was only fair to say that Amendments were introduced by which five of the principal towns in Ireland—namely, Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford—were partially excluded from the operation of the measure, and the duration of the Bill was limited to four years, and the measure was, therefore, passed as an experiment, and in a tentative form. It was a curious circumstance that of the four Irish Chief Secretaries who had held office since 1878, every one had given his opinion, most decidedly, in favour of the principle of that measure—a circumstance not usually found to occur in Irish legislation. Thus Mr. Forster, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1880, in replying to a deputation that waited upon him with the view of getting the Bill made permanent and its provisions extended to the five excepted towns, said that—

> "there was scarcely any doubt that the Act would be renewed, and that, as far as he could make out, public opinion in Ireland had gone entirely in favour of its principle."

In 1883, the right hon. Gentleman, now the Secretary for Scotland, in introducing a Bill to make the Act permanent, and to extend its provisions to the excluded cities, said that he had come to the conclusion that the operation of the Act "had been an unmixed benefit to Ireland." Then he would refer to the testimony of the right hon. Gentleman, the present Leader of the Opposition, who, while Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1889, while replying to a deputation which waited upon him at Dublin Castle used very remarkable words. The right hon. Gentleman said that—

> "it had become manifest to every man who had had the opportunity and the desire to examine into the results of this legislation that the operation of the Act had been of vast benefit to the population of Ireland, and that the Act should on no account be allowed to lapse."

The right hon. Gentleman, the present Chief Secretary, speaking in 1892, had stated most distinctly that—

> "both he and the Government were in favour of this legislation, and were prepared, if they could not introduce a Bill on the subject themselves, to give an entire and hearty support to a Measure having for its object to render the provisions of the Act permanent, and to extend them to the five excepted cities."

There was, therefore, a perfectly unique consensus of opinion on the part of four Chief Secretaries for Ireland, representing both sides of the House in favour, not only of the continuance of the Measure, but of its being made permanent, and of extending its operation more widely. He would now pass to the opinions that had been expressed on the subject by Select Committees of that House. Two Select Committees had been appointed to consider the subject since 1877. The first Select Committee, which was nominated by a Government hostile to the principle of the Bill, had, notwithstanding that fact, reported in favour of its principle. In 1891 a second Select Committee had the whole question raised before it. At that time he had succeeded in carrying to a Second Reading a Bill dealing with Saturday early closing, and that Bill was referred to the same Committee. What happened? This Select Committee, on which was a Conservative majority, reported in favour of the Bill, and in favour of the extension of its provisions to the five large excepted cities, and it was unanimously in favour of early closing on Saturday. He would now come to the manner in which the House itself had dealt with the subject. In 1890, when the right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, was the Leader of the House, a Bill of the character he had indicated was carried in that House by a majority of 242 for, against 78, and in 1891 by a majority of 248 for, against 94. That was the brief parliamentary history of the question, and it showed that four Chief Secretaries for Ireland, two Select Committees, and two divisions in that House had all been in favour of this proposal. The Bill had been before the House over and over again, and had been always carried. In such circumstances as these, the House would doubtless be of opinion that it would be an absolute waste of time for him to enter into arguments *pro* or *con* in respect of the Bill. He was happy to say that the vast majority of the representatives of Ireland, representing every shade of political opinion in that country, had been, and were still, in favour of the principle of the Bill. He was aware that there was a section of the Irish people who contended that this matter ought to be left to be dealt with by an Irish Legislature whenever that assembly might be brought into existence. He, however, did not know that those who put forward that contention were themselves very keen supporters of Home Rule. The question he should like to ask those persons was this: Why should the question of Irish liquor be reserved to be dealt with by an Irish Parliament while the question of Irish land, which involved matters of infinitely greater consequence to the people of Ireland, was reserved for the Imperial Parliament. None of the representatives of Ireland had suggested that the Irish Land Question should be reserved for an Irish Parliament, and therefore he could not understand the views of those who urged that the question of closing public houses in Ireland on Saturday nights and Sundays should be reserved for the determination of such a Parliament. The present Chief Secretary for Ireland, in answer to a deputation, stated that that argument was not one to which he was prepared to listen, and that as long as the responsibility for the Government of Ireland rested upon that House, that House could not shirk its responsibilities in connection with this subject. In his opinion, the only people who desired to reserve the question for the determination of an Irish Parliament were the Irish publicans, who were not very certain in their own minds when an Irish Parliament would come into existence to deal with the matter. What was the opinion of the various Churches of Ireland in reference to this question? Taking the Church of the majority of the population, the Roman Catholic Church, almost all the bishops and clergy were in favour of the principle of the Bill. And it was the same with regard to all the other Irish Churches. Who was it, therefore, who opposed the measure? It was the Irish publicans alone. The opposition to the Bill was a trade opposition, mainly promoted by the Irish Licensed Vinters' Association. He knew of no *bonâ fide* public meeting which had been held in Ireland in opposition to the Bill with the exception of one that was held in Limerick, on which occasion a Resolution in favour of the principles of the Bill was carried in the teeth of the promoters. The point had doubtless been raised as to the expediency of extending the provisions of the measure to the five large excepted cities in which at present the public houses were allowed to be open from 2 in the afternoon until 7 at night. He should not be acting honestly by the House if he did not say that some of the opponents of extending the operation of the Bill to those large cities were willing that the hours during which the public houses in them should be open on Sundays should be reduced and that the houses should only be open from 2 until 5 o'clock. He was not going to deal with such a detail as that in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, because the supporters of the measure would know how to deal with that proposal when the proper time arrived. All he could say was that two Select Committees of that House to which he had referred had given no countenance to such a proposal as that. The Bill also dealt with the question of the *bonâ fide* traveller. He believed that there were such persons in existence, but in his opinion the magistrates had taken an entirely erroneous view of the subject, they having held that it was sufficient to constitute a man a *bonâ fide* traveller that he should have travelled three miles from the place where he last slept. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Local Veto Bill, had raised a hearty laugh by drawing a distinction between the man who travelled to drink and the man who drank to enable him to travel. What usually took place was that a man went a short distance out by either tram car or railway in order to entitle himself to obtain intoxicating liquor during prohibited hours on Sunday. The law in relation required Amendment, and the Bill proposed to extend the three mile limit to six miles, so that at all events a man should have to travel a substantial distance before he could get drink during prohibited hours. The other part of the Bill dealt with a matter of great importance, that of Saturday early closing. Early closing on Saturday night was really of even more importance than Sunday closing because it was on Saturday nights that men received their wages, and instead of taking them home for the maintenance of their wives and children, spent them in the public house, and got drunk, and therefore were the more eager for drink on the Sunday. The waste of money in this way on Saturday nights in the large towns of Ireland was something scandalous. The Bill proposed that all public houses in Ireland should be closed at 9 o'clock at night on Saturdays. It had been suggested that the result of the proposal if carried into law would be to promote the formation of drinking clubs, which would be a very grave evil, but surely it would be in the power of Parliament to prevent an abuse of that kind, and to deal with unlicensed as well as with licensed drinking places, if the former became a public nuisance, a public danger, and a public evil. In view of the history of the subject which he had laid before the House, and of the state of public opinion on the subject in Ireland, he trusted that hon. Members would agree to the Second Reading of the Bill, which would convey a good message to the Irish people, and would gladden the hearts of those who had so long toiled for their welfare. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Mr. C. DIAMOND (Monaghan, N.) said, that he rose to second the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill, in order to formally express his reasons for giving it his support. He entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman opposite that the time for arguing this question had gone by. Even if all classes in Ireland were not unanimously in favour of the principle of the measure, there was, at all events, a substantial majority of them who were anxious that its provisions should become law. The bishops of Ireland regarded the Sunday Closing Act as a great blessing to the country, and were anxious that its provisions should be made permanent and extended to the five large cities of Ireland that were now partially excluded from its operation. The measure was opposed only by those who were interested in the sale of drink. Those who proposed that the question should be reserved for the determination of an Irish Parliament were the very men who had subscribed to the funds employed in preventing Home Rule being carried. It was evident, therefore, that their desire was that the Irish drink traffic should not be interfered with at all. The law prohibiting Sunday drinking in the large towns in Scotland had worked in a most satisfactory manner. He had read articles in the newspapers, written and inspired from what source he could not say, though he could make a pretty shrewd guess, showing that in the large Scotch towns a great deal of Sunday drinking went on. He had made inquiries upon the subject. Only last Sunday he was in a Scotch town, and spoke to a Catholic priest about the matter, and he said that there was no doubt of the good that was done by Sunday closing, and that if there could be early closing on Saturday night, it would be still more apparent. As to Shebeens, he said :—

> "Now and again a case arises, but such a thing is very exceptional."

These facts spoke for themselves, and he left it to others to stand up in the House and speak on behalf of what they were pleased sometimes to call an industry. The testimony of the bishops of Ireland was that drink had done more mischief in every way than anything else, and, as an Irish representative, he felt bound, speaking on behalf of the vast majority of his constituents, to do what he could to see this Bill carried through, and therefore he gave it his most cordial support.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said it must strike everybody as a strange thing that in a purely Irish matter like this, the majority of the Irish Members were absent from the House, and had nothing to say on the subject. The hon. Member for South Tyrone would, he thought, have succeeded better in forwarding the interests of the Bill, which everybody admitted that he had at heart, if he had adopted a different tone in his speech. No one, however, could for a single moment listen to the extravagant and exaggerated attack the hon. Member made on the publicans of Ireland as a class, without feeling that in this matter the hon. Member was certainly not an unprejudiced witness.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am totally unaware of having made any attack on the Irish publicans. All I said was that they were the only opponents of the Bill when meetings were called to discuss it.

MR. W. REDMOND said it was a perfectly natural thing that men who were affected by legislation of this kind should attend meetings held to consider the subject. There were no people in Ireland more capable of giving proper opinion as to the effect of this legislation than the publicans, and they were, undoubtedly, quite as honest in their opinions as the hon. Gentleman or any of his friends. The hon. Gentleman, by his present attitude, showed that he was actuated by a bitter and prejudiced feeling against a class of men in Ireland who were as good citizens as any other class.

Attention being called to the fact that 40 members were not present, the House was counted, and

Forty members being present,

MR. REDMOND, continuing, said that the hon. Member for South Tyrone and the hon. Member for Monaghan, alluded to the fact that certain people in Ireland considered that this was a matter which ought to be left to the consideration of an Irish Legislature. In the first place, that view was held by the late Mr. Parnell, and the hon. Member for Kerry, who, when this Bill was last discussed in the House, was Member for West Belfast, said:—

> "I see no reason whatever to alter the position I took up on this question when it was last before the House. I then stated that it appeared to me that the question of the further development of the restriction on the sale of liquor in Ireland ought to be reserved for treatment by an Irish assembly; in fact, that it was a question which only such an assembly could successfully deal with."

That hon. Gentleman was not in the House at the present time, but he had no doubt whatever that if he were, he would reiterate the statement he then made. The late Mr. Parnell, speaking on this question in April, 1891, said:—

> "If they wish to be consistent, they should leave to Irishmen the settlement of this delicate question, which is surrounded by difficulties, and the solution of which would demand all that is best and most experienced in Irish public life, when the time comes for the Irish people to make their own laws in an elective assembly in Dublin. If hon. Members do not wish to prejudice the question beforehand by their meddlesome interference and bungling attempts to legislate in reference to the wants of the people whom they cannot possibly understand, and in reference to a matter of which they are profoundly ignorant, then they will vote against the Second Reading of the Bill. If they believe that the time is near when Ireland will decide these questions for herself, if they believe their own platform declarations, they will vote against the Bill, knowing that no time will be lost by leaving the consideration and settlement of the question to the Parliament which we all hope to see soon established in Dublin."

He commended those words to the consideration of hon. Gentlemen opposite who were supporters of the Government and of the national demand for Ireland, and he was sure they would receive them with the respect that was due to the words of the late Mr. Parnell. The hon. Gentleman who proposed the Second Reading of this Bill would, no doubt, give him credit for the honesty of the opinions he held in this matter. He was as much interested in the maintenance of temperance in Ireland as any other Member of the House. He had given support on previous occasions to Bills of this kind, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone would probably remember that his father was one of the promoters in the House of the Irish Sunday Closing Bill, a Bill which he was told had had a good effect in Ireland; but it was not dealing honestly with the House to ask them to believe that this Bill was the Irish Sunday Closing Bill which Irish Members supported in times gone by. It was nothing of the kind. It was far more stringent and extreme in every way, and it was perfectly consistent for men who voted in favour of the measure for Sunday closing in Ireland, to be altogether opposed to what was contained in the Bill now before the House. The Bill included within its scope the towns of Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, and Belfast. Was it a reasonable thing to expect that it should be found impossible in those large cities at any time of the day to procure alcohol, no matter how urgent the necessity? If it was thought that such a closing was necessary in country towns, it surely could not be maintained that it was unreasonable to ask that houses of refreshment should be open for a certain number of hours in large cities. He opposed the Bill principally on the ground that it was unreasonable to ask that the provision of Sunday Closing should be extended to the large cities named. He reminded the Chief Secretary also that one of his predecessors in office undertook, when a similar Bill was being debated, that if it was read a second time steps would be taken to exempt the large cities. Would the right hon. Gentleman make a similar declaration now? If the right hon. Gentleman did not do so he was certain that the Bill would be strongly opposed. With regard to the nine o'clock closing hour, he asserted that English Members did not understand the question in Ireland. Houses for the sale of liquor were also the shops where the necessaries of life were obtained by the people. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: "So much the worse."] If this Bill were passed, no poor woman would be able to go after nine o'clock on a Saturday night to purchase a single article of consumption necessary for Sunday. It was, besides, impossible in these Irish shops to make any adequate structural alteration, and therefore the Bill would not only prevent the sale of alcohol but it would make it illegal for the people to purchase the common necessaries of life in the majority of Irish towns. They might speak about Coercion Acts, but in his judgment this Bill was coercion in an extreme form. With regard to the distance for the *bonâ fide* traveller being extended from three to six miles, it was said that people journeyed from towns in tramways specially for the purpose of obtaining liquor. Such language was extravagant and exaggerated. Young men made excursions into the country, it was true, but it was absurd to say that they should have to walk or ride six miles into the country before they could obtain a glass of beer. He was all in favour of temperance, but this was not the way to promote the cause. A Bill like this was calculated to arouse the indignation of the people and to make them think that they were being coerced. The experience of other countries was that where coercive legislation of this kind was in force people only became the more determined to get the article which was prohibited. In the State of Maine, for example, he endeavoured one day to get a glass of wine, but he was told that it was impossible to supply him. It was added, however, that if he stepped down to a cellar he could get what he wanted; so that instead of having drink openly served they could get as much as was needed in secret. The fact was that more drink was sold in this way in Portland, Maine, and other towns where Prohibition was in full force, than in any other State of the Union. Here hon. Members were endeavouring to introduce as stringent a law in Ireland, and its effect would only be to make the people more determined to obtain the liquor which was prohibited. The police authorities and the Corporation officials of Dublin and other large towns had declared against such a Bill as this, because it was well known that where they shut up the public houses, bogus clubs were at once started. The shebeen was infinitely a greater curse in Ireland than the public house. If this Bill was passed, great encouragement would be given to shebeening in Ireland, and unless they were prepared to put down shebeening with a strong hand there was not the slightest use in shutting up the public houses. The way to make people temperate was not to coerce them by legislation of this kind. Let them increase the supervision of the public houses in Ireland, take precautions to see that they were properly conducted, and take every care to relax no vigilance that the liquor sold was of good quality and not poisonous stuff. He believed that this was really the key to the Temperance Question in Ireland. He maintained, moreover, that this Bill had been sprung in a most unexpected way on the Irish Members. Many Members interested in both aspects of the question were absent, and he submitted that this was not the proper occasion on which to take a decision on the question. The Bill should be discussed fully and fairly, and a decision should not be taken in regard to a matter which was of great interest to many hon. Members who did not know that it was coming on that day. It might be said that they ought to have known, but he would point out that it stood fourth on the Order Paper last night, a Local Veto Bill for England and a Local Veto Bill for Scotland being then in front of it. Those Bills had been dropped and the Irish Bill had been brought to the front. Under these circumstances the Debate should be adjourned until the Members for several of the Irish cities included in the Bill had an opportunity of being present, and when it could not afterwards be urged that the Bill had not been fairly discussed. The Members for Dublin were engaged in election contests in Ireland; the Members for Waterford, Limerick, and Kerry were not present, and he appealed to the Member for South Tyrone that it would be more satisfactory that they should be there.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that this Bill had been discussed in former Sessions, when Irish Members were present in force, with the never-failing result that a majority of Irish Members supported it.

MR. W. REDMOND pointed out that the Member for Kerry (Mr. Sexton) opposed the extension of the Bill to the cities. Inasmuch as this Bill extended to the cities of Ireland and introduced fresh matter he would now oppose it, and it was not to be taken that the hon. Member for Kerry would have nothing fresh to say, merely because he had spoken on the subject on a former occasion. Under the circumstances, he urged upon the Chief Secretary that this Debate should be adjourned. The Mover and Seconder were no doubt actuated by the highest motives in bringing it forward. He quite agreed with them as to the enormous evils created by liquor in Ireland, though he could not concur in the sneers which one hon. Member cast upon the Irish liquor trade. The breweries and distilleries were the greatest industry in the south of Ireland, and, that being so, whether hon. Members approved of the liquor trade or not, they should not attempt to deny that it was a great trade, and that, if stopped, enormous misery would be brought upon numbers of people in Ireland. The subject ought not to be entered upon in any tone of bitterness against the publicans. He would support the Bill heartily if he thought that it would have any other effect than that of provoking the Irish people. It was because he thought that this coercion would provoke the Irish people and would defeat its own object that he opposed the Bill. He was ready now and at any future time to promote the real interests of temperance as he understood them, but he never yet knew coercion to lead to any good or to promote the cause of temperance. Every Bill passed by the English Parliament was looked upon with prejudice in Ireland, and if a message were sent to Ireland to-morrow that this Bill had been passed by this Parliament, the effect of that message would be very different to that which the promoters imagined. He moved that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months, and he again appealed to the Chief Secretary to adjourn the Debate till all Irish Members were in their places.

On the return of the SPEAKER after the usual interval,

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, the hon. Member for Clare had made a point when he said that it was undesirable to discuss a question of this degree of social importance in the absence of certain important representative Members from Ireland, but that point had been met by the hon. Member for South Tyrone in an interruption, when he reminded him that these gentlemen had on previous occasions been present; the House knew their opinions, and if they were all present it would make no difference, and would not in any way affect the votes in the House in favour of the Bill. The hon. Member had also argued that this question was one of those which could only be satisfactorily dealt with by an Irish Legislature. He understood that this point had been met by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, whose speech he regretted not having heard, as he had not supposed the Bill would come on so early. The hon. Member for Clare read a passage from a speech of the late Mr. Parnell bearing upon that point; he remembered very well hearing that speech, and Mr. Parnell did, no doubt, say that this control of the selling of liquor on Sundays, and various subsidiary proposals of this Bill, ought to be, and could be, better dealt with by an Irish Legislature than by the present Parliament. He entirely agreed in that as a general proposition, and he was beginning to think that not only such matters as the present, but possibly even the Irish Land Question could be better dealt with in an Irish Legislature than in the present Parliament. But, however that might be, since he had held his present post, he had always said that the desire of his political friends and himself to give Ireland a Legislature of her own, did not in the least impair their duty to lose no chance of conferring upon Ireland a benefit, which the majority of her population desired. While Minister for Ireland he had to see that the Government of Ireland was, at all events while the present system lasted, conducted upon principles which they could defend as principles of good government, and, in his judgment, the passing of the present measure would undoubtedly contribute to the cause of order and social advancement in Ireland. He stood to-day by the position which he took up in 1892, and in conformity with that position, on behalf of the Government, he would do his best to press this Bill forward. The hon. Member for Clare spoke with a frankness, and sometimes, he ventured to say, with a rashness which was pardonable in a person of his not very advanced years; but one thing struck him, and that was that the hon. Member did, in 1892, record his vote for a Bill identical with this one.

MR. W. REDMOND said, that the great difficulty with himself and many others was the inclusion of five exempted cities in the Bill. On the occasion on which the Chief Secretary said he voted, he believed it would be found that an undertaking was given that in Committee on the Bill the exempted cities would be strictly exempted. If a similar undertaking were given now he and others would modify their views.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL asked who gave the undertaking to which the hon. Member for East Clare had referred?

MR. W. REDMOND: The Attorney General for Ireland of the day—now Mr. Justice Madden.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that perhaps he might be allowed to interpose at this stage, as he knew the history of this matter a little better than the Chief Secretary. This was precisely the Bill introduced in 1890 by the hon. Member for South Londonderry (Sir T. Lea). It was quite true, as the hon. Member for Clare said, that the Government, dealing with a private Member's Bill, said that if it went further they would have to move the exemption of five big towns and further limitations in the hours of sale. But those in charge of the Bill gave no such undertaking as the hon. Member for East Clare had referred to.

MR. J. MORLEY, resuming, said, that as to the proposed inclusion of five exempted towns, during the three years he had latterly been Chief Secretary for Ireland, he had taken every opportunity for gaining all the information he could as to the views of those responsible for order in the large towns, and he found in their minds a doubt, such as might exist in the minds of those responsible for order and peace in the great metropolis of London, as to whether legislation which was desirable and satisfactory in its results in other parts of Ireland could be applied exactly as it stood in the Bill to places with large populations like Belfast, Dublin, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford. On the other hand, with regard to Scotch Sunday closing, he remembered it was argued, just as it had been argued now, that Sunday closing was impracticable in cities like Glasgow, and that its consequence would be a tremendous amount of "shebeening" and illicit drinking. He had inquired carefully into the operation of this legislation in Scotland, and he understood that after the Forbes Mackenzie Act came into operation, there was shebeening in Glasgow. But he was told that for some years past, the extensive practice of illicit selling of drink had diminished, so much so that the police thought it normal, or not more than normal, and no discredit to the legislation the House was now discussing. At the same time, whether they were for Home Rule or not, every Minister of the highest standing was bound to move slowly and tentatively in legislation of this kind. For himself, in spite of the opinions of the heads of the police in some of the cities mentioned, he agreed that if the clauses of the Bill were once set going, though there might be a difficulty for a year or two, in the long run, under wise and judicious administration, it would be found that they could be worked well. At the same time he endeavoured never to go too far in advance of public opinion. Therefore, all he could say was, that if this proposal in reference to the five towns now exempted received some modification in the Grand Committee—to which he hoped the House would agree it should be sent—and the Committee thought the five towns should be dealt with, the Government would not consider that as a reason why they should withdraw their support—even their active support—from this Bill. He believed that was a fair, tenable, and judicious method of dealing with the views expressed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, whose zeal in this cause was so well known, and who had worked this question for 20 or 25 years, probably shared the views he himself had given utterance to. What could be worked in Glasgow could be worked in the smaller Irish cities, and he hoped the hon. Member for South Tyrone and those with whom he acted would not be wounded by the Government taking the position they had. So much for a point which was of some difficulty, but not of so much difficulty as had been represented. He did not know whether the hon. Member for East Clare expected him to deal seriously with his contention that this was a Coercion Bill to prevent honest men and women from buying loaves of bread after 9 o'clock on a Saturday night. The hon. Member said truly that in Ireland the sale of liquor was conducted over a great part of the country in shops where the necessaries of life were also sold. From several years' close and responsible observation of Ireland, he could not think of introducing legislation which would result in too large interference with the rooted habits of the people. Still he confessed, that the sale of drink and the necessaries of life at the same place, was an amalgamation of callings which was not in itself favourable to temperance in Ireland. Be that as it might, the argument of the hon. Member for East Clare that this was a coercion Bill, was far-fetched and impossible. If the purchase of bread was delayed by house-wives until past 9 o'clock on Saturday night, probably the moral sentiment of their families next day when they found themselves breadless would be sufficient to prevent a repetition of the occurrence. The hon. Member for East Clare, though he said he was more or less a temperance man, had such a profound and deep-rooted aversion to anything in the shape of coercion that he felt it a point of honour to walk five or six miles to have the pleasure of defying the law and having an illicit drink. He shuddered when he thought of the use that might be made in America of the statement that a Member of that House had actually impressed on the House, as an argument, that he had gone down into a cellar in the State of Maine to have a glass of wine and make a protest against coercive legislation.

Mr. W. REDMOND said, he had no desire to defy the laws of Maine at all. He merely wanted a glass of wine, and he found there was as much drinking in Maine as in any other State he visited in America.

Mr. J. MORLEY: But the hon. Member broke the law, and he had told the House that if this Bill was passed in its present shape it would be his duty to break the law in his own country. All he could say on that part of the matter was that Glasgow had a large Irish population, and if the people in Ireland were likely to resent this legislation and break the law which it was proposed to enact, how was it they acquiesced in it in Glasgow and other places in Scotland. Let the House look at former decisions of Parliament. As the hon. Member for South Tyrone, said four successive Chief Secretaries representing Governments of different political opinions had agreed that legislation of this kind was required. So it could hardly be said that this Bill was uncalled for. The inclusion of the Sunday Closing Act in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill was an admission by various Governments that continuous legislation was required. It was quite true there were in this Bill some extensions. There was no doubt this Bill would receive a Second Reading, and then it ought to go to a Grand Committee. His own position with regard to it was exactly that which was taken four years ago by the Leader of the Opposition, who said—

> "The Motion for the Second Reading is not directly a Government Motion; but it must be

> recollected that the original measure was passed by the aid of the Government, and that it ought to be and must be continued annually by the aid of successive Governments. Therefore, it cannot but be concluded that this Bill ought not to stand in the ordinary category of a private Member's Bill, but it partakes in a modified sense of the character of a Government measure."

That was exactly the view the Government took of this Bill. What the right hon. Gentleman promised on behalf of his Government he certainly would promise, with a more lively hope, perhaps, than the right hon. Gentleman entertained that the support of the Government might be effective. If the Bill came back from the Grand Committee without any such modifications as would transform it, but with reasonable amendments in the direction he had indicated, he should be disappointed if the Government were not able to press the Bill forward and to save it from the fate which would contribute to what he was told was to be the barren Irish record of this Government. Certainly no effort would be wanting on his part to do his best to forward the Bill, with every desire to give the fullest operation to Irish views in the stage of Grand Committee.

*Mr. DAVID PLUNKET (Dublin University) said, he joined heartily with the right hon. Gentleman in the regret he had expressed for the time at which this Bill had unfortunately come forward. The state of the House did not at all represent the great interest which was felt in the Bill by all parties in Ireland; but, as they all knew, there were various circumstances, both in the political and in the social world, which had that day the effect of thinning the House; and there were many Members, including both opponents and friends of the measure, who would have been in their places if it had not been anticipated that the Bills which stood before it on the Orders would have occupied the House for some time. Speaking for the Conservative and Unionist Members from Ireland, with whom he usually acted, he desired to say that they were unanimous on this subject, and heartily supported the Second Reading of this Bill. As had been stated, the Bill was the result of inquiry by a Committee in 1888, presided over by his late colleague, Mr. Justice Madden, who was then Attorney General for Ireland, and who was not prepared to go the same length as his Committee in regard to the modifications affecting the five great towns. This was a point on which opposite opinions were held by high authorities entitled to great respect, and it was one to be thrashed out in Committee. He would not follow the right hon. Gentleman into, he would not say his arguments, but his theories as to whether the Bill might or might not be better discussed in a Home Rule Parliament; but the reference of the right hon. Gentleman to his Land Bill sounded like a groan of the deep despair suffering extracted from his feelings by the position in which he now found himself and might hereafter find himself with regard to that measure. Passing away from that controversial subject, he would say that he had himself always felt strongly in favour of the principle of this Bill as affecting Ireland, and especially as affecting the country districts. He was satisfied from his own observation that, in the south and west of Ireland, at all events, the amount of unnecessary drinking brought about by the temptations offered on Sundays to the people was to be deplored. The social condition of the Irish people in country districts and their habits as to drinking were different from those of the people of England; and, therefore, in supporting this Bill, he did not wish to be taken as expressing any opinion upon the application of its principle to England. But he affirmed that in Ireland there was greater unanimity on this than on almost any other social question that had been brought forward in his time. There was singular unanimity, not only amongst laymen, but also among the clergy of all denominations. He counted among his constituents nearly all the clergy of the disestablished Church, and 99 out of every 100 of them joined most warmly and cordially with the Roman Catholic clergy in the desire that this Bill should be passed as soon as possible. He therefore trusted that on this occasion it might be allowed to go to a Second Reading without a division.

Mr. W. E. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said he should be reluctant to divide the House against the Second Reading of the Bill; but the clause relating to the five large towns was one of deep importance. At the last election he had declined to give pledges to the trade, and he had refused to endorse, on the question of including the five towns, the views of the Irish Temperance League, who, therefore, spoke of him as the "drunkards' candidate." He now felt it his duty to ask whether the promoters of the Bill would give an undertaking, on the lines of that given by Mr. Madden, which secured many votes in 1890, and which was that an Amendment should be inserted providing for the closing of public houses in five towns at 5 o'clock instead of 7 o'clock. If the hon. Member for South Tyrōne could give an assurance that such an Amendment should be favourably considered with a view to its acceptance, then he should be able to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. There were one or two other points on which he would take the judgment of the Committee when they were discussed. Complaints were made that the extension of the limit to six miles would involve hardship, and he had no doubt that it would produce a race of Irishmen which would be unequalled on the six mile stretch.

*Mr. ALFRED WEBB (Waterford, W.) said, that he had always felt a great interest in this question. He regretted that there was not a larger attendance of Irish Members, but that was not the fault of the promoters of the Bill, and was no reason why it should not be proceeded with. The way the question had dragged on year after year without any solution for it being found was, in itself, an argument for Home Rule. If ever public opinion were secured for a measure, the public opinion of Ireland was secured for a Bill dealing with Sunday Closing. The country was thoroughly aroused on the question, and was entirely in favour of the proposed legislation. The very names of the Bill's backers were sufficient proof of this fact, and exhibited a remarkable combination of parties in support of the measure. It could not be said that the measure was in any degree coercive. The experience of other countries ought to have weight; and effects of Sunday Closing in Scotland had been most beneficial, as they had been in Ireland where the provision was in operation. If there were anything coercive in the provisions, the Scotch people would not have submitted to them. He was quite satisfied that there would be no difficulty in extending Sunday Closing to the five excluded cities in Ireland. Temperance reformers were always met with the request, on the part of their opponents, that they should do something other than what they proposed; but no specific alternative was suggested. He did not believe in the argument that all the evils of intemperance resulted from bad liquor. He had seen the worst results where liquor of the best quality was used. It was one of the shallowest arguments against temperance legislation. All restrictions on the liquor traffic were more or less coercive, and if coercion was an argument against the Bill, it was equally good against any restriction whatever. In 1882 a canvass was taken in the five excluded cities of Ireland as to the desires of the inhabitants in respect of Sunday Closing. That canvass was taken with the greatest fairness, and with a desire to arrive at the real facts. The result was that in Dublin 34,000 voted for Sunday Closing, and 8,000 against; in Belfast 23,000 voted for, and 2,000 against; in Cork 9,000 voted for, and 1,870 against; in Limerick 5,600 voted for, and 550 against; and and in Waterford 3,400 voted for, and 290 against. That was a strong indication of the drift of public opinion. Anything which would tend to separate the ordinary trade in Ireland from the liquor trade would be a great benefit. There were two customs in the country which greatly extended drinking. One was the unfortunate one of holding fairs in the streets of the towns, and the other was the practice of selling drinks in almost all shops of every description. He believed that the opposition to the Bill arose almost entirely from those who were interested in the sale of liquor. It was urged against the reform that it would be a very bad thing to injure one of the greatest industries in Ireland. Brewing and distilling were, in truth, some of the lesser industries of Ireland. He found from the census of 1891, that there were only 2,398 people engaged in them. He should cordially support the Bill.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) expressed his regret that the least voice of dissent to the Second Reading of this

Bill had come from the North of Ireland. As one of the representatives of the great city of Belfast, he wished to inform the House that upon scarcely any other subject was there a greater consensus of opinion among the inhabitants of Belfast than upon the question of Sunday Closing. There was almost a unanimous feeling in Belfast in favour of the city being included in the scope of the Bill, and he hoped that, whatever alterations might be made, that feeling would be gratified.

Mr. D. CRILLY (Mayo, N.) said that an hon. Member from the North of of Ireland had dissociated himself from this Bill, as had, also, the hon. Member for West Clare. He also desired to place himself in opposition to those who supported the Second Reading. The opposition to the Bill did not come entirely from the North of Ireland, and he hoped that the Chief Secretary and the hon. Member for South Tyrone would concede to those who opposed it, that they had as much at heart the sobriety and moral elevation of the Irish people as anyone else. The morality and the sobriety of the Irish people were quite as dear to the Nationalists as they were to their opponents, but it was because he, and those who acted with him, did not believe that the Bill would effect the laudable purpose the hon. Gentleman had in view that they offered opposition to it. In his opinion, the operation of the Bill would lead to the demoralisation of a section of the Irish people rather than to their elevation and improvement. Personally, judging from the effects of temperance legislation in Scotland and in Wales, he thought a moderate amount of drinking which people could have under the existing law in Ireland, was better than a system under which a section of the people would be driven, as they inevitably would be driven if this Bill became law, to the secrecy of the shebeen or the bogus club, where they would only obtain the vilest and most deadly poison in the shape of drink. He regretted that the Bill should come before the House on the Second Reading when most of the representatives of Ireland were still holiday-making, because he was convinced that had they been present the majority of them would have been found to oppose the measure as they did when it was last before the House. The hon. Member for South Tyrone smiled, but that hon. Gentleman would not contradict him when he said that when the Bill was last before the House 20 Members of the party to which he (Mr. Crilly) had the honour to belong voted against it, and only 12 for it. [Mr. T. W. Russell: "What about the Ulster Members?"] He could not answer for the conduct of the Ulster Members. All he knew was that when a popular measure was proposed from the Nationalist Benches in the interest of Ireland the Ulster Members invariably opposed it, and for that reason he did not at all desire to be associated with Ulster Members in Irish matters. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said the House could, with its great power, as easily deal with clubs and shebeens as it proposed to deal with licensed houses in Ireland. But what would happen in the interim? A long time must elapse before the House could deal with the clubs which would grow up if public houses were closed on Sunday, and even if they were able to achieve the feat of closing the clubs, were they perfectly satisfied that other agencies would not crop up of a more dangerous and vicious kind? The hon. Member for South Tyrone taunted the opponents of the Bill with the fact that only publicans were opposed to the Bill. He agreed with the hon. Member for West Clare that, naturally, in a trade matter of this kind the publicans took an active share in the agitation; but why was it that of the 81 Nationalist Members none but fanatical teetotallers were found to back the Bill? He did not use the word fanatical in any offensive sense; he admired fanaticism; it had sometimes brought about most beneficial reform. The hon. Members for West Waterford, South Meath, South Mayo, South Monaghan, and North Kildare backed the Bill. All those Gentlemen were excellent colleagues and most earnest Nationalists, but they could scarcely be expected to take an impartial attitude on the question whether it was wise or not to sell a limited amount of—well, refreshment if they like, to the people of Ireland for six days of the week, and refuse to do so on the seventh day. The Gentlemen who supported the Bill were all county Members;

they had Sunday closing in their constituencies. Why were they not content with the existing condition of things, and thus leave the five exempted cities alone? Where were the representatives of the five exempted cities? The House would look in vain for any public utterance on the part of the representatives of the five exempted cities, showing that the majority of the people of those cities desired to come within the purview of the measure. Where were the representatives of Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, and, he might almost add, Cork, although the name of one of the Members for Cork was on the back of the Bill? The non-appearance of the names of the representatives of the five exempted cities was due to three facts. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: "There are the names of the representatives of three of the exempted cities on the back of the Bill."] He excluded Belfast. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: "What about Cork?"] He had already mentioned Cork. [Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: "Dublin."] The name of one of the representatives of the city of Dublin appeared on the back of the Bill, but it would not be contended for a moment that that gentleman represented the great bulk of the working classes of Dublin. The absence from the back of the Bill of the names he had in view was due to the fact that the representatives of the exempted cities did not think the working people and the general public wanted the Bill, and that they were convinced the Bill would not work for the moral good of the towns affected. He would now turn to the Bill. [*Cries of* "Oh."] The supporters of the measure had had a hearing, and surely those who opposed it should have some little chance of giving reasons for the faith that was in them. The Bill might be divided, roughly speaking, into three parts. The first part proposed to close the public rooms in the five exempted cities and towns on Saturday evenings at nine o'clock; the second to extend the three mile limit for travellers to six miles; and the third to establish total Sunday closing of public houses throughout Ireland. He thought the Bill should have been divided into two Bills. If he were not mistaken, the hon. Member for South Tyrone and his temperance friends were originally satisfied to introduce a Bill dealing simply with the question of total Sunday closing by the inclusion of the five exempted cities in the law of Sunday Closing. But now they proposed to encroach upon the hours for the opening of public houses on Saturday by fixing the hour for closing in the exempted cities at nine o'clock. He believed it would be more logical and consistent for the hon. Member for South Tyrone and his friends to propose that public-houses should be closed altogether every hour of the week. If they closed public houses from week end to week end they might be able to wean people from their taste for drink; they might be able to establish a universal system of temperance, but so long as they kept the public houses open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, it was futile for them to think they could make the people sober by closing the public houses from nine o'clock on Saturday night to Monday morning. People who liked drink would get it whenever they wanted it. With regard to the retention of the limit from three miles to six miles, it would be better from the point of view of the promoters of the Bill to fix the limit at 20 miles, for they would then make it absolutely impossible for any working man to get any refreshment at all on Sunday mornings. What would be the result of extending the limit to six miles? In Dublin many men of the general middle class who had no desire for drink, were in the habit of taking country walks on Sunday, and he believed such men would be tempted to extend their walk to six miles, and being tired, and not liking the prospect of walking back another six miles to dinner, would get into some wayside public house, and meeting friends there, would stay there instead of returning to their homes. He therefore thought it would be far better if the limit were extended to something like 20 miles. But the part of the Bill to which he had the most rooted and fundamental objection was the part which proposed the total closing of public-houses on Sundays in the five cities that were at present exempted from the operation of the Sunday Closing Act. He should like the House to understand that there was a very strong feeling in Ireland against the Bill. From every class there had come the strongest and most emphatic declaration against the Bill, its principles, and its purposes. A strong minority of the Select Committee of 1880 reported directly against the Bill. Thousands upon thousands of the working-classes of Dublin petitioned against the Bill when it was before the House in 1893. The Trades Council of Dublin, a body whose right to speak on behalf of the artizans and labourers of Dublin would not be impugned, passed resolution after resolution against the Bill. Mr. Nannetti, their representative, opposed the Bill before the Select Committee. Public meetings protesting against the Bill were held in Dublin. The Corporation of Dublin presented a petition against the Bill at the Bar of the House in 1888, and passed Resolution after Resolution of opposition to it. He begged to controvert the statement of the Chief Secretary that the priesthood of Ireland desired to have this Bill carried into law. Dr. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, and Dr. McAllister, Bishop of Down and Connor, were strongly opposed to the total closing of public-houses on Sundays in Ireland. At a public meeting in the Father Matthew Hall, Dublin, and subsequently in a letter to the Press, Archbishop Walsh stated that where bogus clubs existed under present conditions he was adverse to any further restrictions of the liquor trade. In that he thought there was a complete answer to the statement that the priesthood of Ireland were absolutely in favour of the total closing of public-houses in Ireland on Sundays. The priests were not in favour of anything of the kind. He could multiply instances of clergymen in Ireland who had set their faces against the Bill. A well-known Belfast priest said before the Select Committee on the Bill :—

> "We are strongly of opinion that there are other means whereby the cause of temperance could be more effectually promoted than by this Bill. The improvement of the social condition of the working classes would do more for temperance than coercive legislation."

Mr. O'Donel, a well-known Dublin Magistrate, who was thoroughly acquainted with the condition of the poorer classes in Dublin, said :—

> "It is hopeless to expect by any change in the law to make the working classes more sober until there was an improvement in their wretched domiciles."

In a matter of this kind, dealing with social reform, all sensible men ought to approach it not from the point of view of theory but from the point of view of experience. And what had experience taught them? The Chief Secretary, in his brief speech, in supporting the Bill, had instanced the case of Glasgow as one in which the later operation of the Sunday Closing Act had proved beneficial. He disputed this, and he contended that both in Wales and in Scotland up to this very moment the operation of the Sunday Closing Act had been a dead and dismal failure. On this very subject an article appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of April 9th, in which it was shown that shebeening in Glasgow at the present hour was as strong, virulent, and poisonous to-day as it was when the Sunday Closing Act was passed. The article stated—

> "This prohibition (Sunday Closing) has led to the establishment of hundreds of illicit drinking places known as shebeens, where whisky, ale, and similar delights could be purchased with very little trouble and risk of detection."

He himself was prepared to quote

statistics supplied to him by high authorities which fully supported this view.

MR. J. WILSON (Govan): The hon. Member says he has information from high authorities. May I ask who these high authorities are? His whole speech so far as Glasgow is concerned——

*MR. SPEAKER (interposing): Order, order. The hon. Member is not entitled to do more than ask for the authorities.

MR. CRILLY said, the reason he forbore from quoting statistics as to Glasgow was because he was afraid of wearying the House. His point was that in that city the Sunday Closing Act, so far as the moral elevation of the people was concerned, was so great a failure at this hour as it was in the past. It was very difficult to get at the facts in connection with Scotland, but they were not so much at sea when they came to deal with Wales. In the case of the Principality they had got the high respectability and authority of a Commission sent down by Parliament, presided over by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and he thought that House should always receive the Report of Commissioners presided over by Members of the other House with all due respect, and without questioning their *bonâ fides* or the accuracy of the evidence they circulated. What was the effect of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales? He would take the evidence of witnesses from the three large towns of Cardiff, Swansea, and Merthy Tydvil. Mr. Hemingway, who was examined before Lord Balfour's Commission in April, 1889, produced a Report dated 1st December, 1888, in which he said—

"With reference to the Welsh Sunday Closing Act I may say that so far as Cardiff is concerned it has not been successful inasmuch as it has been the means of an increase in Sunday drunkenness. That drunkenness is traceable to bogus clubs, and other illicit drinking houses which have come into existence consequent upon the closing of public houses; but the figures given are by no means indicative of the extent of the evil, as a great many cases do not come under the notice of the police in the streets, the persons getting intoxicated remaining inside the houses until they recover."

Superintendent Price of the Cardiff Borough Police was asked by Lord Balfour, the Chairman of the Commission—

"Do you consider the working of the Act up to the present time has been beneficial?—WITNESS: I do not consider it beneficial. The CHAIRMAN: In what respects is it not?—WITNESS: Owing to the wholesale dealers, bogus clubs, and shebeen drinking."

In reply to a further question the witness said that those who visited the clubs and shebeens were chiefly working men.

"The CHAIRMAN: Residents in the town?—WITNESS: Yes, and those who work in the district and come into the town from Saturday night to Monday morning. The CHAIRMAN: That being so the actual quantity of drink consumed per head is larger now than when the public houses opened? — WITNESS: Certainly. The CHAIRMAN: Do you speak with confidence on that point?—WITNESS: I do."

These were the opinions of two police officials, and from them he would appeal to the clergy of the district. The rev. Father Cormack, who was deputed to appear before the Commission as the representative of the Roman Catholic bishop and clergy of Cardiff, where he had resided for many years, in reply to the Chairman, stated:—

"Before the Sunday Closing Act I never heard of the existence of the drinking clubs in the town. I knew that shebeens were kept very few and were scarcely observable, but since the Act, and within a few months, clubs in Cardiff multiplied in all parts of the town. They became a familiar feature in nearly all the streets where there were resident masses of working men."

Again interrogated by the Chairman, Father Cormack stated that—

"when the drinking clubs were put down between 1886 and last year, the shebeens began to multiply very fast in all parts of the town. Along with that increase came a great increase of drunkenness. I will not say in the public streets. . . . The superintendent estimates the shebeens at 103 in the town. I consider that below the exact number of shebeens."

The rev. Gentleman then gave various statistics, and he went on to say that there was now an increase of drunkenness in private houses, the evil of which was very much aggravated by temptation to other crimes as well. The drinking in private houses (the witness continued) brought together persons of different ages, men and women, young and old, and there was no doubt whatever that a great deal of demoralisation had been caused by this repression of the evil, which drove it deeper into the body and spread it among private families. Children became accustomed to scenes of riotousness and drunkenness—

"and although I have no figures, I may say, if I may be allowed to, that I think there is an increase in illegitimacy since the Act came into operation."

He (Mr. Crilly) thought that that was a terrible indictment to bring against the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Wales. The opinion of the priesthood of Ireland had been referred to. What did the Rev. Canon Richards, of Swansea, say with reference to the result of Sunday closing in Wales. Asked by the Chairman of the Commission as to the general effect of the Act, he said, the Act was demoralising all round, demoralising to the people who obtain drink surreptitiously, demoralising to the publican who had to run the risk of detection in breaking the Act or losing a part of his custom, demoralising to the children who generally were the agents for procuring the liquor, or were put in the streets to watch the police, demoralising to the police, who had to go through a series of dodges and adopt a system of espionage in order to discover illicit drinking, and demoralising to the bench, because a magistrate who on Sunday had sent his butler for a bottle of old crusted port would next morning on the bench condemn a poor man who had simply sent for a pint of beer. But he need not fall back upon the Catholic priesthood, upon the clergy of the Church to which he belonged. The Rev. James Allen Smith, the Vicar of Swansea and a Canon of Lincoln, in the course of his evidence said, the Act, speaking generally, had done some good, but in other directions it had not only not wrought good but there was the question whether it had not wrought much harm. Asked in what direction did he think the Act had not done good the rev. gentleman said—

"I think it has driven men away from their homes for the purpose of obtaining drink, and from observation and information which has been given me I think it has led to the establishment of clubs."

The Police Superintendent, stationed in Swansea for 19 years, admitted that the convictions for Sunday drunkenness had increased since the passing of the Act, and attributed the increase to working men being prevented getting drink in a legal way. Mr. John Thomas, who was 48 years a member of the Glamorgan County Police Force, and for 21 years attached to the Merthyr Tydvil Division, gave evidence as to the increase of drunkenness in Aberdare since the Act was passed, and in answer to Sir Richard Harrington, said there was more general intemperance in the district since the passing of the Act than before. The Roman Catholic priest in Merthyr Tydvil was asked by the Chairman of the Committee if he wished to express an opinion as to the state of matters on Sundays at the present time. The witness said—

"It is difficult for me to understand how they could be worse than at present. In the back streets there is a very great amount of drunkenness."

Again the rev. gentleman said—

"I do not think there is nearly so much drunkenness on the week days as on Sundays."

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to move that the question be now put.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member will not continue to read extracts at much greater length, and that it will be unnecessary for me to put the question. There are only 50 minutes left, which time could not be profitably employed on any other measure.

Mr. CRILLY trusted the extracts he had read had had some influence on the House. He could read other extracts, but he did not want to take up the time of the House; he had no object in doing so. Judging from the result of the operation of Sunday Closing in Scotland and Wales, he was convinced it would be a mistake to apply the Sunday Closing Act to the five exempted cities of Ireland. He considered that the people of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick and Waterford had as much right to be able to get refreshment on the Sunday as the people of London had. Why was not a Sunday Closing Bill brought in for London? If Ireland was to be muzzled why not London? He traversed everything said by the Chief Secretary, and because he believed the Bill would lead to the demoralisation of a section of the Irish people he intended to give it his strenuous opposition.

Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said, that as the Bill would largely affect the working classes in Ireland he might be permitted to say a word or two from the labour point of view. He did not agree with all his hon. Friend (Mr. Crilly) had said. He did not take the view that a great amount of harm would be done by Sunday closing, but there were one or two points which deserved consideration. In the first place some consideration must be shown for the people who were employed in the public houses, and for that reason he was rather inclined to support the Bill. But he was not in favour of entire Sunday closing, because he had had considerable experience in Cardiff and in Glasgow. He found that the operation of the Sunday Closing Act in Glasgow and Cardiff had not led to a diminution of drunkenness. The shebeens of Cardiff were a disgrace to the town, and they had largely increased in number in consequence of entire Sunday closing there. He thought a death blow might be struck at the shebeens by a partial opening of public houses on Sunday. If public houses were opened for an hour or two some opportunity of rest and recreation would be afforded the people who were employed in the houses, while the working men would be able to get what they required in the way of refreshment. There were more drunken people to be seen on Sunday morning in Glasgow than in any other town or city in the country. ("Oh") He spoke from his own observation. He had crossed many of the bridges in Glasgow early on Sunday morning and met 10, 12, and as many as 20 people struggling across. He had seen these things himself, and he was not going to take the word of any hon. Member as against the evidence of his own eyes. Such a state of affairs was not found in towns where the public houses were open for a certain number of hours. He did not think, however, that it was right to keep public houses open on Sundays for as many hours as they could be kept open now. It was a disgrace to working men that they should ask that public houses should be kept open so long for their convenience, for those who worked in public houses were thereby greatly inconvenienced. He hoped that the proposals made in this Bill would be modified, and that the temperance party would be satisfied with a limitation of the Sunday hours.

*Sir C. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) wished to refute the extraordinary statements which the House had just heard. A poet had said that some individuals "think all men are mortal but themselves." When listening to the observations of the hon. Member who had just sat down it struck him that some men thought no men sober but themselves. Statistics proved that in Glasgow, in the 24 hours between 8 o'clock on Sunday morning and 8 o'clock on Monday morning, the number of arrests for drunkenness amounted to only one-sixth or one-eighth of the number of arrests on any other day of the week. No one wanted the public houses to be opened on Sundays in Glasgow; even the publicans were perfectly satisfied with the present arrangement. Since restrictions had been put upon the opening of public houses in Scotland there had been a marked diminution in drunkenness. The experience of Glasgow and of all Scotland told in the most marked and powerful manner in favour of the Bill before the House. Statements such as those made by the hon. Member who had just sat down might express what he thought he saw in Glasgow, but certainly did not represent the real state of things.

MR. P. DUNBAR BARTON (Armagh, Mid) said, that as the representative of an Ulster constituency he could not refrain from giving his vote in favour of this Bill, and he should vote for it in deference to public opinion in the locality which had returned him to Parliament. But he could not give that vote without some qualification. He was on the Board of Directors of one of the largest brewery companies in Ireland, and was in a position to know that allegations detrimental to the character of the publicans of Ireland were unfounded and unfair. They were an honest and honourable body of men, who had a very difficult business to carry on, and he believed that, on the whole, they carried on the difficult business with propriety and credit to themselves. Any excessive drinking that occurred among the Irish people or any part of them was due not so much to vicious habits as to convivial and social proclivities. The general charge of excessive drinking, sometimes made against the Irish people, was greatly exaggerated, if not groundless. He was of the opinion, shared by many Members, that in fairness to the working classes public houses ought to be opened for a short time on Sundays. He was, therefore, more in favour of a reduction of the hours than in favour of total closing. A reduction of the hours would not be open to the objection raised against total closing—namely, that it would lead to more drinking in private dwellings. However, as an Ulster Member, he felt bound to record his vote in support of the Bill.

MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.), explained that he would gladly go into the same Lobby with the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. W. Russell) if he thought that the Bill would effect the object that the hon. Member had in view. But he had listened attentively to the arguments adduced in support of the measure, and he had failed to discover that from the five exempted cities any expression of opinion had come in favour of the Bill. If he could think that the Bill would tend to the social elevation of the people he would heartily support it, but his conviction, arising out of personal observation, was that the Bill, instead of attaining the objects of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, would rather have a contrary tendency. It would be likely to increase the illicit traffic in drink. He inclined to the belief that if the hon. Member for South Tyrone would endeavour to diminish the number of drinking clubs in Dublin, the cause of temperance reform would be likely to gain far more than it would gain under this Bill, which would interfere with a trade which was recognised by the State. At present in Dublin, in clubs which were supposed to be open to members only, the law was violated every Sunday. Members were supposed to have tickets, but these tickets were never used, and a member could go to a club and take a dozen companions with him. He would prefer to see a man taking a drink in a public house openly and honestly, rather than see him getting intoxicated in a club.

In Cork, many clubs would spring into existence if this measure passed, and the results would be disastrous to the working men themselves and injurious to their children. Instead of spending their time at home, working men would spend their time in these clubs, and the habit of drinking would increase. In Dublin, raids had been made upon clubs, and fines had been imposed ranging from £50 to £100, and yet people had not been deterred from carrying on this illicit traffic. Would the closing of public houses be likely to decrease the number of clubs in existence and to lessen the evil of drink? No; the unfortunate man who had the craving for drink would go to a club, and so the law would be defeated because there a man could sit and drink from morning until night. He opposed this Bill then, because he knew the evil results of these clubs, and he was supported in his opposition by the opinion of the people of the five exempted cities. The hon. Member for South Tyrone was in error in thinking that there was no expression of opinion from the working men of those cities. In Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Belfast there had been strong denunciations of this measure. At a meeting in Cork in 1888, which was open only to legitimate tradesmen, a Resolution was passed almost unanimously against the provisions of an exactly similar measure. He wished the House would realise that instead of tending to the increase of temperance, instead of abolishing the evil which the hon. Member for South Tyrone alleged existed, this Bill would have a contrary effect. Working men who in many places had not comfortable dwellings would resort to clubs, and knowing the evils of the club system, he declared that it was far better that a working man should go into a public house and take his drink publicly than that he should frequent a club. He did not think that the people who were employed in public houses had any great reason to complain of the hours of work. If public houses were closed throughout Sunday working men would drink in clubs or at home, where the child would see the father drinking. The idea of drinking would then become familiar to the child, who, in consequence, would very likely develop drinking habits in manhood instead of becoming a sober member of society. It was not the wealthy classes who would be affected by this measure, but those people who owing to their position in life could not go into hotels. On the class that resorted to hotels no observation was kept by the police. Those who composed it had free admission to hotels at all hours, for they had good clothes to their backs. The man who had an inferior coat to his back was the man whom the police watched. Whilst the hotels in Dublin and Cork were passed over by the police, severe attention was bestowed upon the public houses. He should like to see a Bill introduced for the purpose of doing away with the present club system. As long, however, as that system continued to exist a Bill such as they were now considering would do no good, for instead of diminishing the drink evil, instead of bringing comfort and happiness into the home of the working man, it would have the effect of extending the club system, and would encourage the pernicious practice of private drinking.

The House divided:—Ayes 168; Noes 69.—(Division List, No. 45).

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL Moved, that the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade.

MR. D. CRILLY rose to oppose the Motion.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to Move that the Question be now put.

Mr. SPEAKER not accepting the Motion,

Mr. CRILLY said, that on a previous occasion the Second Reading of a Bill of which he was in charge was carried at a quarter past five, and he then Moved that it should be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade; but the House in its wisdom refused to allow him to have it so Committed, although in the previous week the Pistols Bill of the hon. Member for Brixton had been referred to the Standing Committee on Law. On this occasion, seeing that most of the men who were interested in this Question were away in Ireland, he thought the House should pause before it permitted a Bill of this character and scope to be transmitted to the Standing Committee. There was a great deal of difference of opinion upon this Bill, and he could not see for the life of him why it should be allowed to remain in the keeping of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. Those who were opposed to the Bill were not members of the Standing Committee. He had a great interest in this Bill, and had followed and pursued it for the last ten years, and not being a member of the Standing Committee, he could not see why the Bill should be withdrawn from his purview. He thought the House ought to protest against this trick of Moving, five minutes before the half-hour, that the Bill should be sent to the Standing Committee. Surely, if hon. Members had any consideration for their constituencies they would not allow a Bill, which affected the social condition of thousands of people, to go out of the control of the House. He could understand a technical Bill being sent up to a Standing Committee, but he could not understand why a Bill, which dealt with a large social question, as this one did, should be taken away from examination by the House and shunted upstairs. They all knew what happened in the Standing Committee, and therefore he strongly protested against the Bill being sent there, and he trusted that the hon. Member would not move that the Question be now put. This was a very large question. It had been before the House for years and years, and had raised strong opposition on one side or the other, and it was in his opinion trifling with the dignity of the House of Commons to attempt to send such a Bill to a Standing Committee.

Lord FREDERICK HAMILTON (Tyrone, N.) Moved "that the Question be now put."

Mr. Speaker having accepted the motion,

The House divided:—Ayes, 149; Noes, 69.—(Division List No. 46.)

Question put accordingly:—

The House divided:—Ayes, 151; Noes, 68.—(Division List No. 47.)

## MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

Queen's Answer to Address (9th April),—Resolution reported:

"That the annual sum of four thousand pounds net be granted to Her Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the Right Honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel, late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said Right Honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mellor, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill for settling and securing an Annuity upon the right honourable Arthur Wellesley Peel in consideration of his eminent services; presented accordingly [*amid cheers*] and read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed.—[Bill 211.]

## DISTRESS BILL (LORDS).

The House went into Committee on this Bill, and resumed the consideration of Mr. E. Pickersgill's new Clause, dealing with illegal distress, the Debate on which was adjourned on April 8.

Clause agreed to and added to the Bill.

**Mr. H. D. GREENE** (Shrewsbury) moved the following new Clause:—

> "In any proceeding against any person for an offence under this Act, such person shall be competent, but not compellable, to give evidence, and the wife of such person may be required to attend to give evidence as an ordinary witness in the case, and shall be competent, but not compellable, to give evidence."

**The ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Sir R. T. Reid, Dundee) explained that this was a clause which was very commonly added to Bills nowadays, in order to enable a person charged with an offence under a particular Statute to give evidence on his own behalf.

Clause agreed to, and added to the Bill.

The Bill, as amended, reported.

## LARCENY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill read 2°.

## RULES OF THE ROAD AT SEA.

**The PATRONAGE SECRETARY to the TREASURY** (Mr. Thomas Ellis, Merionethshire) moved that the name of the Attorney General be added to the Select Committee on the Rules of the Road at Sea.

**Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON** suggested that the seamen ought to be represented on the Committee.

**Mr. T. E. ELLIS** thought that the Committee as proposed would be a fair representation of the House, but he was quite willing to consider whether a Member, as desired by the hon. Member, could be added, as it was still competent to appoint two more members to serve on the Committee.

**Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY** (Islington, S.) thought it was hardly fair to alter the constitution of the Committee, in the absence of the hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. T. Gibson Bowles) and others, who had taken a great interest in the subject, and who had assented to the Committee as now constituted.

**Mr. J. HAVELOCK WILSON** rose to address the House again, but,

**Mr. SPEAKER**, interposing, said that the hon. Member had already spoken.

Question put,

That Mr. Attorney General be a Member of the Committee.

**Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON** opposed the Motion, and

Motion accordingly stood over.

House adjourned at Six o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS.

*Thursday, 25th April 1895.*

The House met at Three of the Clock.

## *MOTION.*

### METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, under the Metropolitan Police Act 1886, relating to lands in the parishes of St. Pancras and Wimbledon.

Bill presented accordingly, and read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed.—[Bill 212.]

### LANDS CLAUSES (TAXATION OF COSTS) BILL.—[H.L.].

Read 1°; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 213].

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### LONDON AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

On the Order for the Second Reading of the London and North Western Railway Bill,

MR. D. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon District) said, that he should object to a Second Reading being given to the Bill until the Directors of the Company had had an opportunity of reconsidering their attitude in regard to certain action of their officials in that part of the country which the new powers were asked for—namely, North Wales. The Company had used the powers it already possessed in a way prejudicial to the interests of the inhabitants. He was aware that, under the ruling of the late Speaker, given in 1891, it would be out of order to discuss a question of the general policy of the railway company when the remedy rested not with the company but with some outside authority. With regard to the crying grievance which he now brought before the House, the redress rested entirely and alone with the London and North Western Railway. Some time ago it was observed that the Directors were weeding out their Welsh-speaking workmen on this railway. The Directors, with whom he entered into communication on the subject, asked him to submit specific instances of workmen who had been discharged because they were unable to speak English; and he gave a number of cases, into which the Directors professed to institute an inquiry. They stated in a letter that the reason for the dismissal of these men was not that they were unable to speak English; but what it was they would not divulge. That left the impression on other employers of labour that the men had been dismissed for incompetence. The Directors, however, promised that nothing of the kind should occur again; and for two years there was no ground for complaint. But a short time ago they resumed the old policy. Their attention was again called to the matter, and he would read to the House a letter written in reply by one of the chief officials of the company.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I understand the hon. Member proposes to object to the Third Reading of this Bill on the ground that the railway company have adopted a certain policy as regards the non-employment of what the hon. Gentleman describes as monoglot Welsh platelayers. It seems to me that would be a course that would be out of order [*Opposition cheers*] on a Bill of this kind and at this hour. It is my duty to see that the time devoted to private business is consumed solely with those matters which are relevant to private business. I quite understand the hon. Gentleman is seeking to show that the case he has in mind is relevant. So far I quite understand what his point is; but it seems to me it would be out of order to raise the question on this private Bill. The conditions of employment is a matter of general policy not confined to a single railway company; it does not affect the making of this particular line; it does not affect the particular locality or the particular public for whom the line is to be made; it is a question of policy which refers to all railway companies, at least, in all parts of Wales. It should be applicable not to any one company only, but to all companies working railways in any part of the country. ["Hear, hear."] Under these circumstances it appears to me that the course of argument which the hon. Member is adopting is out of order on this occasion. [*Opposition cheers.*]

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he would bow absolutely to the Speaker's ruling, but he might be permitted to point out he was objecting more particularly to the 11th and 13th Sections of the Bill. The London and North-Western Railway Company asked the House of Commons to give them special powers with regard to the acquisition of lands in a particular part of the Principality where he thought they had already misused their powers. As he could not go into the reasons why he objected to those clauses he would move that the Debate be adjourned for a month [hear, hear], in order to give the directors of the company an opportunity of reconsidering their decision.

Mr. DAVID PLUNKET (Dublin University) said it was not possible for him to enter into the subject upon which the hon. Member who moved the adjournment was about to proceed, because the Speaker had ruled it out of order, but he desired to say a word with regard to one statement the hon. Gentleman had made. The hon. Member spoke of an earlier occasion on which he brought certain cases of alleged hardships before the London and North-Western Railway Company. These cases were most carefully gone into, and he assured the House they had nothing to do with the employment of men as Welshmen or as Welsh-speaking Welshmen, or in any other respect as regarded their nationality or their language. He had also to say there was, so far as he was informed, no foundation whatever for the statement that the railway company admitted anything——

*Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Gloucester, Stroud): I rise to order, Mr. Speaker. Is the right hon. Gentleman in order in referring to topics which were mentioned by the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs and which you said ought not to be touched upon?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Of course, the policy of the company cannot be argued, but, at the same time, the hon. Member having made reference to a certain point—an attack upon the company—I think I ought not to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman in what, I am sure, will be a short statement.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): May we reply to it?

*Mr. SPEAKER: There cannot be anything in the nature of a general discussion.

Mr. PLUNKET said he was not referring to a question of policy, but to a statement of fact, which he challenged.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: What about the circular?

Mr. PLUNKET said, that the statement of fact was that the Railway Company so far admitted the grounds of the charges made that they gave an undertaking that no such thing should occur again. So far as he was informed, no such undertaking or condition of any kind was ever given. As to the Motion for Adjournment, he had only to say that the main object of the Bill in all its clauses, and especially in the clauses referring to Wales, was to give additional facilities to the public. If the Bill were adjourned, or if it were thrown out, the results would be much more injurious to the people of Wales and of the other portions of the country affected than to the London and North Western Company. He would be ready at any time to meet the hon. Member's charges, if they were the charges which he had seen in the newspapers and elsewhere.

*Mr. BRYNMOR JONES thought the right hon. Gentleman had furnished the best argument for the Adjournment of the Debate for, at any rate, a short period, inasmuch as he had challenged the accuracy of the statement of fact made by the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs. It was well to remember that the right hon. Gentleman was one of the directors of the London and North Western Railway Company; he was a man peculiarly interested in that great monopoly, and the fact that he had made statements which hon. Members disputed was the very best ground for the Adjournment of the Debate.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) hoped the right hon. Gentleman, who was generally very fair, would consent to the Adjournment of the Debate, not necessarily for a month, but for a few days, in order that the directors of the company and the hon. Members from Wales might have an opportunity of coming to terms. He understood that they could not discuss this matter on this Bill, but if necessary he should be glad to join the hon. Gentleman from Wales and throw out a Bill without giving their reasons; but he hoped that with an adjournment the London and North-Western Railway would do what was right in this case.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS said, that, as a Welshman, a Welsh-speaking Welshman, and also as a shareholder in the London and North Western Railway, and as a Member of the House of Commons, he was quite prepared to accept the result of throwing out the Bill until the directors of the company, which he could not but denominate as a most arrogant company, could be brought to their senses.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, it seemed to him bad policy on the part of the London and North Western Railway Company to fly in the face of local public opinion upon a matter that evoked national sentiment to an extraordinary degree. In his opinion the right hon. Gentleman who supported the Third Reading of the Bill had, in the face of his traversing the facts alleged by the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs, no choice but to accept the Adjournment of the Debate. If in the meantime the right hon. Gentleman could prove that the statements of the hon. Members were untrue, he would win many hon. Members to his side.

MR. PLUNKET said, he and the Railway Company had not the least objection to any amount of inquiry. He had only to repeat that he trusted the adjournment would not be of a kind that would baffle a Bill, the passing of which was much more to the interest of the public than of the company.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Will the right hon. Gentleman agree to an adjournment for a month?

MR. PLUNKET: That is a very long time. [*Cries of* "A week."]

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. J. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) suggested that the hon. Member for Carnarvon had been met in a fair way by the right hon. Gentleman, and thought the object would be attained if there were an adjournment for a fortnight.

Debate adjourned for a fortnight.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### THE AGED POOR COMMISSION.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Government has considered the various Reports made by members of the Royal Commission on the Provision for Old Age; and what action they propose to take in regard to this question?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. G. J. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The Reports of the Royal Commission on this important subject show very great difference of opinion among its Members. It appears, however, that a majority of them, in their separate Reports or Memoranda, are of opinion that further examination should be made of the various schemes for old age pensions, with the object of ascertaining whether the difficulties and objections which have been raised to them can be removed. In view of this the Government will take measures for a further examination of the matter, but they are not able at present to come to any final decision on the subject.

MR. WALTER LONG (Liverpool, West Derby): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that portion of the Report which refers to friendly societies, and which will involve but a slight alteration of a non-controversial character in the law relating to friendly societies, has been considered by the Government?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: That has not yet been considered by the Department concerned, but I will communicate with the Department, and I have no doubt that a communication will be made to the friendly societies.

*The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir John Hibbert, Oldham): I wish to say, in answer to my hon. Friend opposite, that the Treasury is about to introduce a Bill to amend the Friendly Societies Act, which will contain some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Mr. WALTER LONG: May I ask does it include such an alteration in the Act of 1870 as will enable juvenile societies to be merged in adult societies?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: Yes.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give any intimation of the time when he will be able to state definitely the measures the Government intend to take?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Not at present.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, whatever his Department may contemplate in connection with friendly societies, he will see that those societies have ample notice of what the Department intend to do?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Most certainly.

### VILLAGE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN SCOTLAND.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Scotch Education Department has decided as to the legality of school boards granting allowances for the board in villages of children residing at distances too great to enable them to attend school from home; and whether, if such allowances are held to be illegal, Her Majesty's Government will consider how children so situated can be provided with education?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Sir George Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The Scotch Education Department have been advised that there is nothing in the Education Acts which enables School Boards to grant allowances for board under any circumstances, except under the Blind and Deaf Mute Children Act, 1890. The cases where children reside so far from school as to make their attendance impossible are rare, and the Department holds that each case should be considered on its own merits. We are ready to advise where the circumstances are brought to our notice.

### SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN INDIA.

Mr. W. S. CAINE (Bradford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India—(1) what steps, if any, have been taken by the various local governments and administrations in India with respect to the recommendations of the Viceroy in Council, under date 17th August, 1882, relating to discipline and moral training in schools and colleges in India; and (2) whether he will call for a Return showing in what respects the several suggestions and desires of the Viceroy in Council, contained in the above-mentioned document, especially the desire that each Local Government and administration should, either by the appointment of a committee, or by employing selected individuals who need not be officials, or by the offer of suitable prizes, effect a revision of readers in the Government schools in a direction indicated, have been carried out, and with what results?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds), answering in the absence of Mr. Henry Fowler: The Secretary of State is not in a position to give a complete reply to the first branch of this question, but he will have no objection to call for a Return showing what has been done in the matter of revising the text-books, or to carry out any of the other suggestions of the Government of India as to which my hon. Friend specially desires information.

### MYSTERIOUS DEATH IN BALLO LOCH, FIFE.

Mr. HERBERT PAUL: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Fife (Mr. Birrell), I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether his attention has been called to the mysterious death of a man whose body was recently found in Ballo Loch, Fife, and to the delay of the county Procurator Fiscal in the matter, and to the delay of that official to hold a public court of inquiry into the case, and to his not ordering a *post-mortem* examination of the deceased; and whether it is his intention to propose any alteration of the present method of inquiry into sudden and violent deaths in Scotland?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross): The body was found in Ballo Loch on Sunday the 24th of March. Information was at once given to the police; and on the following day the Procurator Fiscal directed Dr. Hay, of Leslie, to make an examination of the body, which was immediately done. Dr. Hay reported that there was nothing to suggest that the death was due to violence, and that the whole appearances showed that it was due to drowning. As the body was still unidentified on Tuesday the 26th, the Procurator Fiscal telegraphed to Dr. Hay authorising him to make a *post-mortem* examination; but on the same day the body was identified by the father of the deceased, who objected to a *post-mortem* examination being made, as he was quite satisfied that death was caused by drowning, and that there were no grounds for suspicion. Dr. Hay again expressed himself as fully satisfied with respect to the cause of death, and the body was accordingly handed over to the relatives for burial. In the meantime the Procurator Fiscal made full inquiry in regard to the movements of the deceased since he left Edinburgh on the 19th of March. As the result of the whole investigation there is no ground for suspecting violence or foul play. There is no authority, according to the law or practice of Scotland, for holding a public inquiry in such a case; but I consider that the Procurator Fiscal should have gone as soon as possible to the place where the body was, and personally made such investigation as he could there. Except as regards the class of cases to which the Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill relates, there is no intention to propose any alteration of the present law and practice of Scotland in regard to inquiries into sudden or violent deaths.

## SURGEON MAJOR-GENERAL GIRAUD.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether, and for what specified period, the services of Surgeon Major-General C. H. Giraud, Principal Medical Officer at Netley, has been extended beyond the age laid down by Regulation for retirement; and whether, and when, the period of extension was notified to the Officer concerned.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The services of Surgeon Major General Giraud have not been extended beyond the maximum age laid down by Regulation for retirement. The age laid down by the Royal Warrant for retirement of a Surgeon Major General is 62 when the interests of the public service would be materially advanced by his retention to that age; and it was deemed advisable to retain Dr. Giraud's services at Netley till he reached that age. He was verbally informed of this at the time it was so decided.

## THE MOMBASA AND UGANDA RAILWAY.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, having regard to the terms of the Report of Sir Gerald Portal and what has since occurred, what are the intentions of the Government with reference to the construction of the Mombasa and Uganda Railways?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The question of the Railway in East Africa is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, but I am not able at present to make any statement on the subject.

## CADASTRAL SURVEYS IN INDIA.

MR. H. T. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of Bengal obtained the consent of the Behar Planters' Association to the Bill for the maintenance of the Record of Rights, and for recovering the costs of Cadastral Surveys, imposing on the land of Bengal heavy additional taxation, on the express pledge of the Government that the Patwari Regulation of 1817 should be abolished; whether the Secretary of State in a subsequent despatch encouraged the expectation of abolition; whether the Government of Bengal, at the last moment, when the Bill came from the Select Committee to be passed into law by the Legislative Council, admitted the promise, but stated that they had amply redeemed it by their endeavours to get the Regulation repealed, but stated that the Government of India had decided against repeal, and that, consequently, they had struck out the repealing Clause; whether the Maharajah of Durbhanga, as an elected member of the Council, thereon declared that this would be generally regarded as a breach of faith on the part of the Government; and, whether the Secretary of State will either veto the Bill, or instruct the Government of India to permit the Government of Bengal to fulfil their promise?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: It was stated by the Bengal Government that a part of their scheme was to repeal the Patwari Regulation; but the Secretary of State for India is not aware that an express pledge was given that it should be repealed. The Secretary of State, in July 1894, assented to the proposal for repeal. The Report of the Bengal Council proceedings of the 9th March, when the Bill was discussed and referred to a Select Committee, has not yet reached the Secretary of State; so he is unable to verify the quotations from speeches made at that debate. But, so far as he is aware, the Select Committee have not yet reported on the Bill. The Secretary of State is unable to say what action he will take until he receives the Act in its final shape, and the discussions of the Bengal Council thereon.

## CHITRAL.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the present Ruler of Chitral, Amir-ul-Mulk, secured his present position by murdering his brother, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to support Amir-ul-Mulk as Ruler of Chitral?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: As the question of the policy to be pursued in Chitral is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, the Secretary of State must request the hon. Member to postpone his question for the present.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. E. H. HULSE (Salisbury): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he is prepared to furnish the House with a Return of all elementary school teachers, male and female, who are at present occupied in the work of education, and have attained the ages of 60 and 65 respectively?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND York, W.R., Holderness): A Return including this information, for all certificated teachers employed in elementary public schools during the year ended 31st August 1890, was furnished on the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Kingston, in 1891, when the School Board for London Superannuation Bill was under consideration by a Select Committee of this House, of which the hon. Baronet was Chairman. The figures of this Return, which will also be found more fully analysed in Appendix 10 to the Report of the Select Committee, were used as the basis of the calculations made by the Departmental Committee in its recent investigations into the general question of teachers' superannuation, and that Committee did not find it necessary to ask that a fresh Return should be prepared. Such a Return would involve a great deal of labour, and I hardly think it is necessary at present; but if the hon. Member still wishes to press for it, it can be furnished.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he proposes, during the present Session, to introduce any measure for the superannuation of teachers in the public elementary schools, in accordance with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee appointed by him, with the concurrence of the Treasury, to consider the question?

MR. ACLAND: This is a very large question which involves a very large sum of money, and requires very careful consideration; but the Government are not without hopes of being able to deal with it in the course of this Session.

## CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

MR. HERBERT PAUL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the number of unsuccessful candidates at the last examination for the First Division of the Civil Service to whom appointments have been offered; whether it is intended to give any further appointments to unsuccessful candidates; and whether he has considered the advisability of adopting the alternative course of promoting clerks from the Second Division to such appointments?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: The term "unsuccessful candidates" is misleading. The recent examination was held in order to fill eight existing vacancies and others that might occur during the next six months. Two such have occurred. No candidate has been, or will be, offered an appointment who has not shown himself to be fully qualified, nor has any one been appointed who has not graduated in Honours at the University. Although it is not proposed to depart from the established principle that admission to the First Division shall be by competitive examination, the Treasury is always ready to consider a recommendation from the head of a Department for the promotion of a Second Division clerk of exceptional ability and qualifications to fill such a vacancy in his Department.

## EMPLOYMENT OF SLAVES BY BRITISH SUBJECTS.

Mr. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a contract has been entered into with an English firm at Zanzibar to convey a Government steamer from the Coast to the Victoria Nyanza Lake; whether the contractor is allowed to employ Zanzibar slaves to carry portions of the steamer and the necessary fittings; and whether the edict originating in Sir Gerald Portal's warning that the employment of slaves by British subjects in those caravans encourages the slave trade, has recently been made void; if so, for what cause?

Sir E. GREY: A launch has been bought from an English firm, who have contracted to deliver it on the Victoria Nyanza. The contractor will have to comply with the existing regulations of the Zanzibar Government for the engagement of porters, so far as they are recruited at Zanzibar. The chief origin of the edict alluded to was the scarcity of labour in Zanzibar, and it had no special reference to slaves. It is considered that the interests of Zanzibar and the good treatment of the porters employed are protected by the present regulations.

## PATENTS.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade in view of the fact that there are in and out of this country 1,339,062 old and new patents up to 1st January 1894, can he state whether there are abstract indexes of all these patents, complete and fully classified, available to the public to consult in London, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, Dublin, or other large business centres; and whether, short of a costly trial at law, any English patent under our present system of issue is definitely known to be valid and free from old matter from one or more of the foregoing patents?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): Printed weekly and annual indexes of all British patents are regularly supplied to libraries in the cities referred to by the hon. Member, and also to 31 other business centres. It is well known that the grant of a patent carries with it no guarantee of validity.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the all-round average lifetime of patents in this country for the year 1892 was only about four years ten months and two weeks; whether he will state what it was for the years 1893 and 1894 respectively, together with the number of patents voided for each year; and whether he will forewarn, or safeguard, the public from taking out patents, under the belief that all patents live 14 years, by instructing patent agents acting in connection with the Patent Office to state spicuously, yearly, on all their advertisements, books, or other publications, what the all-round average lifetime of patents has been for the preceding year?

Mr. J. BRYCE: I am aware that the average lifetime of a patent in this country is about five years. In 1893 and 1894 it was about four years and eight months. The number of patents which lapsed in 1893 was 9,302; and in 1894, 9,925. The Board have no power to instruct members of the profession of patent agents to make any statement on the subject. I believe that, as a rule, inventors are aware that the life of a patent depends on the payment of renewal fees. There is a statement to this effect on every patent issued.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: Arising out of that question, I would like to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, considering the way in which Members of Parliament are badgered by patentees, and the advantage that would accrue from publicity being given to the answer he has made to the hon. Member's question, he will consider the advisability of publishing it in *The Labour Gazette* and *The Board of Trade Journal?*

Mr. J. BRYCE: I thought the points were perfectly well understood, but I will consider the suggestion of my hon. Friend.

## DISTRESS IN IRELAND.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the distress existing in Glencoe, in the Belmullet Union, and Derry, in the Ballina Union; and whether it is the intention of the Government to take any steps to provide employment for the people in these districts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): There are a few families in the division of Glencoe for whom it may be necessary to afford relief by employment on a relief work, and such a work will be opened in this neighbourhood on May 1. As regards the Derry division, a most careful inspection was recently made of the district, and the Local Government Board inform me that the circumstances of the people there are not such as to render necessary, at present, the opening of relief works.

## MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE NENAGH UNION, IRELAND.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that Dr. M. J. Calahan, who was called on at night to attend four urgent cases in and about Nenagh, on 6th March 1895, when no other medical man was available, and was appointed by the Nenagh Board of Guardians and the Dispensary Committee; but that, after a month's delay, the Local Government Board wrote to the Committee of the Dispensary not to pay him, on the plea of his being dismissed over 17 years since, by a sealed order, from a Dispensary for refusing to prosecute extremely poor patients for not complying with the Vaccination Act; and, whether he will look into the matter?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The facts, I am informed, are substantially as stated in the question. Having regard, however, to the fact that the gentleman referred to was the only medical man available when the permanent doctor took ill, and that his services were urgently required in some cases, the Board have reconsidered the matter and authorised payment for the temporary services rendered by him.

## THE ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether it is the fact that 62 regimental officers serving in the Ordnance Store Department have been ordered to rejoin their regiments on the termination of their appointments; whether he is aware that, when the Army Service Corps was formed out of the Commissariat and Transport Staff, the regimental officers serving with the Commissariat and Transport Staff were given the option of continuing their service in the Army Service Corps; whether his attention has been drawn to the promise given by the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, in the House of Commons, on 2nd August 1879, that the Ordnance Store officers would receive treatment "on all fours" with the Commissariat and Transport Staff; and, whether the War Office contemplate the appointment of Artillery officers at enhanced rates of pay over the heads of the present senior officers in the Ordnance Store Department?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Regimental officers now serving in the Ordnance Store Department will rejoin their regiments on completion of the periods of service in terms of their engagements. Only such officers as were selected from the Commissariat and Transport Staff for service in the Army Service Corps were given the option of continuing their service in the latter corps. It must be remembered that the organisation of the Supply Department of the Army has been completely changed since 1879. It is not contemplated to appoint Artillery officers over the heads of officers at present serving, except in one or two cases in the highest ranks, where the establishment will be increased so that no hardship will arise.

Mr. ELLIOTT LEES: Has the Commissary General been consulted?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no doubt that everybody concerned has been consulted?

### RE-DIRECTION OF LETTERS.

Mr. HERBERT PAUL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that some local postmasters consent to forward letters for persons who have left the neighbourhood after giving notice of their new address, while others refuse to do so; whether there is any official rule on the subject; and, whether, for the public convenience, he will direct that letters shall be forwarded in all such cases?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Arnold Morley, Nottingham, E.): Postmasters are required to re-direct letters for householders and the members of their families who have permanently removed and have furnished their new address; but the Post Office does not undertake to re-direct letters addressed to hotels or lodgings which can be more conveniently re-directed after delivery. If the hon. Member will let me have particulars of any cases which he has in mind, I shall be glad to make enquiry into the matter.

### JAPANESE COMMERCIAL PRIVILEGES IN CHINA.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether Japan is bound by existing engagements to share with the United Kingdom any commercial privileges she may possess or acquire in China or elsewhere?

Sir E. GREY: No engagement exists with Japan to this effect, but under Article 24 of the Treaty with China of June 26, 1858, "it is agreed that British subjects shall pay on all merchandise imported or exported by them the duties prescribed by the tariff, but in no case shall they be called upon to pay other or higher duties than are required of the subjects of any other foreign nation," and under Article 54 of that Treaty, the British Government and its subjects are "confirmed in all privileges, immunities and advantages conferred on them by previous Treaties," and it is "expressly stipulated that the British Government and its subjects will be allowed free and equal participation in all privileges, immunities and advantages that may have been, or may be hereafter granted by His Majesty the Emperor of China to the Government or subjects of any other nation."

### OUTBREAKS OF SHEEP-SCAB IN HAMPSHIRE.

Mr. W. H. MYERS (Winchester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to the recent outbreaks of sheep-scab in Hampshire; and, whether he will direct an inquiry into the origin of the disease, and take prompt measures for stamping it out.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. Herbert Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): Yes, Sir, I have received returns respecting the five outbreaks of sheep-scab reported from Hampshire during the present year. It rests with the local authorities to make all necessary enquiries and to carry into effect the requirements of the Orders of the Board of Agriculture on the subject of the disease in question, and I gather from the reports before me that those authorities are fully alive to their duty in this respect. In one instance, the person in charge of the sheep was prosecuted for not giving notice of the appearance of the disease, and a penalty was imposed by the magistrates.

### HAWAII.

Captain DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Kerry (Sir Thomas Esmonde), I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Republic of Hawaii is under the protection of the United States; and, whether it would be possible for Her Majesty's Government to approach the Government of the United States with a view to obtaining proper treatment for Queen Liliokuolani?

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Before this question is answered, as I happen to know the lady who was formerly Queen of Hawaii, I wish to ask the hon. Baronet whether he will allow me to join the hon. Baronet opposite in bespeaking for her kindly treatment, and whether he is aware that she is imprisoned against the will of a very large majority of her subjects?

SIR E. GREY: I cannot add anything with regard to the imprisonment of the Queen to what I have already stated in reply to previous questions. In answer to the question on the paper, I have to say that the Republic of Hawaii is not under the protection of the United States, and no such action could be taken by Her Majesty's Government.

DR. MACGREGOR: Can the hon. Baronet not make an *ad misericordium* appeal to the American Government?

SIR E. GREY: As I have said, the Republic of Hawaii is not under the protection of the American Government, so that they are not the proper people to refer to.

DR. MACGREGOR: Has the Republic of Hawaii been recognised by the British Government?

SIR E. GREY: Yes, Sir; the present Government has been recognised.

MR. J. F. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1) whether he has observed the communication of Mr. Frederick Harrison, a British subject resident for 17 years in Honolulu, in *The Standard* of 18th April; (2) whether any official confirmation of the outrages, alleged by Mr. Harrison to have been committed on himself and other British subjects at the instance of the Government of the Republic of Hawaii, has been received; (3) whether any protests from oppressed British subjects in Honolulu have reached the Foreign Office; (4) whether he can state the number of British subjects that have been sentenced to imprisonment for alleged complicity in the recent Royalist rising at Honolulu; (5) whether it is a fact that no British war vessel was present at Honolulu to support the protests of Major Hawes, the British Resident Commissioner, against the ill-treatment of British subjects under martial law; and (6) what steps, if any, have been taken to enforce treaty obligations with the Republic of Hawaii, guaranteeing to British subjects the protection and enjoyment of the due and regular process of law?

SIR E. GREY: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. Many British subjects were arrested for charges of participation in, or complicity with, the insurrection. The reports do not confirm the stories of outrages described by Mr. Harrison; but they contain numerous complaints of hardships suffered while in prison. Protests have been received from the British subjects arrested and they are being carefully considered. Besides the British subjects who have been sentenced to imprisonment, many have been dealt with under martial law and subsequently induced, under pressure as they assert, to leave the country. No British man-of-war was at Honolulu at the time of the outbreak. The proceedings of the Hawaiian Government were all taken during the interruption of the regular course of law by the proclamation of martial law, which has now ceased, and Her Majesty's Government are now considering whether the facts, when fully known, would justify them in taking any action.

## OUTBREAK AT BRASS.

SIR GEORGE BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now state what arrangements have been made for a full inquiry into the late difficulties on the Brass River; and what is the tenour of the instructions given to the Commissioner charged with the inquiry?

SIR E. GREY: Sir John Kirk has been appointed Commissioner, and will proceed to Brass by the steamer of the 11th of May. His instructions will embrace an inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the recent outbreak, the redress of grievances, and the maintenance of order in the two Protectorates.

## THE SUB-POSTMASTER OF ASHLEAGH, COUNTY MAYO.

DR. ROBERT AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that in October 1894 a complaint was lodged against the sub-postmaster of Ashleagh, County Mayo, that he had given the use of the post office room to the Church Mission Society for a night school; that he acted as reader to the church mission; that an inspector was sent down from Dublin to inquire into the matter; and that the sub-postmaster admitted being guilty of both offences; and, will he see that, the district in question being a purely Catholic one, the successor to the present sub-postmaster will also be a Catholic?

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, I would like to ask him whether he does not consider it extremely undesirable to establish a sectarian test for official appointments in Ireland?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: In October last a complaint was made to the effect stated by the hon. Member. On inquiry it transpired that Mr. Courcey, who was acting as Postmaster during a vacancy, had lent the room, in which the post office duties were being temporarily carried on, to a benevolent lady for the purpose of holding a sewing class. No religious topics appear to have been introduced at the meetings; but as it was considered that a post office was not a proper place for such a purpose, the class was at once removed to other quarters.

Dr. R. AMBROSE: Is it not the fact that the Church Mission Society have already removed this Postmaster?

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY: No, I am not aware of that fact.

## MACHINE GUNS.

Viscount CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Maxim and quick-firing guns are served out to all regiments when on foreign service; and whether he will consider the advisability of supplying them to all regiments, Cavalry and Infantry, at home and abroad?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The question of the best tactical distribution of Machine guns is under consideration. Till this is settled, I cannot give a reply to the noble Lord's inquiry.

## DISEASED SHEEP.

*Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtownshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if his attention has been directed to a report recently submitted by Mr. Alexander Pottie, V.S., Paisley, to the directors of the Renfrew Agricultural Association, on a disease affecting 70 per cent. of the sheep imported from America; whether the Inspector of the Board of Agriculture has confirmed or disproved the accuracy of that report; whether the disease has been ascertained to be parasitic or hereditary, or both; and whether any precautions are in contemplation or operation for the protection of the home stock?

*Mr. HERBERT GARDNER: I have received a copy of the report to which the hon. Baronet refers, and have been in communication with the Renfrewshire Agricultural Society respecting it. Specimens of the diseased parts of the sheep in question are now under examination by my veterinary officers, and so soon as I receive their report I shall be in a position to give the hon. Baronet the further information he desires, and to determine whether any further action on my part is requisite.

*Sir H. MAXWELL: Have reports been received from any other district on the same subject?

*Mr. GARDNER: No, Sir; not that I am aware of.

*Mr. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if he was aware that there had actually been a case in which these American ewes had been bred from, which was followed with disastrous results; whether that case had been reported; and whether the right hon. Gentleman, having regard to that fact, would communicate the result of the inquiry he was now making at the earliest possible moment.

*Mr. GARDNER: I shall be glad to communicate the result at the earliest possible moment. I have no information such as the hon. Gentleman suggests.

## SCOTCH BOUNDARIES.

Mr. J. H. C. HOZIER (Lanarkshire. S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether a decision has been arrived at with regard to the boundaries between the parishes of Hamilton and Dalziel?

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I hope that a decision may be reached in the course of next week.

## GLAMORGANSHIRE INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION SCHEME.

Mr. DAVID THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, if he can state the position of the Glamorganshire Intermediate Education Scheme?

Mr. ACLAND: A Petition under Section 39 of the Endowed Schools Act 1869 was presented towards the end of last year to the Queen in Council, by the Rector and certain inhabitants of Galligaer against this scheme; and was, in accordance with Section 14 of the Endowed Schools Act 1873, referred to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council It is understood that the petitioners do not desire to proceed with this Petition, and it may be anticipated that it will very shortly be dismissed by the Judicial Committee for want of prosecution. In that event the scheme will, in accordance with Section 15 of the Endowed Schools Act 1873, be laid before Parliament.

## MEASURES IN THE POTTERIES.

Mr. WILLIAM ALLEN (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it has been brought before his notice that the Inspector of Weights and Measures at Lincoln has refused to pass a number of measures from the Potteries though they were stamped; and if he will issue instructions to prevent such occurrences in the future?

Mr. BRYCE: The Board of Trade are not aware that the Inspector of Weights and Measures at Lincoln has refused to pass stamped measures from the Potteries, but they have had brought to their notice a case in which the same Inspector has refused to pass measures stamped in another district. The law provides that a measure duly stamped by an Inspector shall be a legal measure throughout the United Kingdom, unless found to be false or unjust, and shall not be liable to be re-stamped, because used in any place other than that in which it was originally stamped. If the hon. Member will send me the particulars of the case, I will communicate with the Local Authority at Lincoln, but the Board of Trade are not empowered to issue instructions in the matter.

## WELSH EMIGRANTS.

Mr. DAVID THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if, in future Returns, he will cause Welsh Emigrants to be distinguished from English, as is now done in the case of Irish and Scotch; and if further legislation is necessary for the purpose whether he will provide for it?

Mr. BRYCE: The Merchant Shipping Act of 1894 provides for the classification only of English, Scotch, and Irish Emigrants. To distinguish Welsh Emigrants from English, further legislation would be necessary. I do not think it will be possible this Session to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, and the addition of a further classification is a point which would in any case require some consideration, as, the further sub-division is carried, the more difficult does it become to frame Returns, and to rely on their accuracy.

## Mr. DURSTON'S PAPER ON "THE MACHINERY OF WARSHIPS."

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he would give, as a Parliamentary Return, the valuable Paper recently read by Mr. Durston, Engineer-in-Chief of the Royal Navy, before the Institute of Naval Architects, entitled: "The Machinery of Warships," and the discussion which ensued thereon?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): This Paper is the property of the Institution of Civil Engineers; and Mr. Durston did not deliver it in his official capacity as Engineer-in-Chief of the Royal Navy. I do not think the Admiralty can take the unusual course of giving as a Parliamentary Return a document of this kind for which they have no responsibility.

## THE ROYAL LIVER FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

Mr. J. HEATH (Staffordshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that a combination of agents and collectors and of the Committee of Management of the Royal Liver Friendly Society has sought, by interference in elections of delegates throughout the country, to secure the return of a body of delegates pledged to subvert the delegate system whereon the

Society is founded, and so to obtain a control of the Society by agents and collectors, contrary to the Friendly Societies Acts; and whether the Government can interfere to prevent the said Committee of Management from expending the funds of the Society in convening from all parts of the United Kingdom, and holding in Liverpool, a meeting of the Royal Liver Agents and Collectors Union, wherein the Committee of Management took part to promote their common design of subverting the constitution of the said Society, as settled by its rules and the said Friendly Societies Acts?

Sir JOHN HIBBERT: The Government is not in possession of any information on the matters referred to in the question. If the delegates of the Society should make any alterations in its rules giving the control of the Society to its agents and collectors, such an alteration would be contrary to the Friendly Societies Acts, and would not be registered; and, not being registered, would not be valid. If it is the fact that the Committee of Management have wilfully applied any part of the funds of the Society to purposes other than those expressed or directed in its rules, and authorised by the Friendly Societies Acts, any member of the Society can obtain from the Registrar of Friendly Societies authority to take proceedings under Section 16 (9) of the Friendly Societies Act, 1875.

### REPORTS OF ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

Mr. W. S. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he is aware that *The Times* newspaper has, during the last six days, devoted six columns to an analysis and criticism of the Reports of two Royal Commissions, namely, the Opium and Hemp Drugs Commissions; and that the Hemp Drugs Commission Report was commented upon by the Indian Press, with copious quotations, more than two months ago; and, if so, will he cause inquiry to be made how copies of Reports not yet presented to Parliament have got into the hands of the Press; and is he now able to state when these two Reports will be issued to Members of this House?

Mr. CYRIL DODD (Essex, Maldon): I would like to ask the Secretary of State for India whether these two Reports were sent to all the principal London papers at the same time, or only to *The Times*; and, if only to *The Times*, why that paper alone was selected?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Secretary of State has seen the notices to which my hon. Friend refers. The Report of the Hemp Drugs Commission, with the Orders of the Government of India thereon, have been published in India. The Secretary of State has been informed by the Secretary to the Opium Commission that, owing to an unfortunate misapprehension on his part of the practice in such matters, a copy of the Report was prematurely shown by him to a representative of the Press. His error has been pointed out to him. The Secretary of State will be happy to lay a copy of the Hemp Drugs Commission Report on the Table if my hon. friend will move for it. The Report of the Royal Commission on Opium will be laid upon the Table this evening.

Mr. DODD asked why the error was confined to one paper only?

Mr. G. RUSSELL: My hon. Friend continues to ask me for information which I do not possess. I would tell him if I knew, but I do not.

### DISMISSAL OF AN ARMY SURGEON IN MADRAS.

Mr. W. S. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he is now able to state his decision in the case of Surgeon Major Smith, lately dismissed by the Government of Madras, who appealed to the Secretary of State against his dismissal on the 18th of January last; and, if he will lay the papers relating to this case upon the Table of the House?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: The case of Surgeon Major Smith is still under the consideration of the Secretary of State.

### PRISON CLERKS.

Mr. T. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Treasury asked the Commissioners of Prisons, in a Minute of even date (10th August 1889), for a Return to be filled up under two heads, viz., clerks of the Lower Division and other established clerks, rising through one or more classes to a maximum not exceeding £400 per annum, including duty pay; and, if the competitive clerks in Her Majesty's prisons, who paid an examination fee of £3, entitling them in the customary course of promotion to a maximum of £400 per annum, were not included in this Return under the head referring to that maximum, will the Treasury send it back for correction in this particular, and exchange these clerks' certificates for those of the Second Division in order that the Royal Commissioners' recommendations for the Civil Service as a whole may be acted upon?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The Return referred to was duly sent to the Treasury by the Home Office, and the prison clerks were included in it. The storekeepers and first- and second-class clerks of the Prison Department were placed in this Return under the head of "Established Clerks" (other than the Lower Division), rising through one or more classes to a salary not exceeding £400 a year.

## THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS COMMISSION.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state when the maps, which were to be issued with the Report of the Highlands and Islands Commission, will be ready?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: I am informed that the maps will in all probability be delivered at the House of Commons by the end of this month.

DR. D. MACGREGOR asked whether it was the case that the maps in question were promised before the Easter holidays?

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: No; I do not think there was any promise about the matter. I said they were expected to be ready about the end of the month.

## KITCHEN BOILER EXPLOSIONS.

MR. J. G. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he has, since the 19th March last, considered whether some means might be taken to warn householders how to prevent kitchen boiler explosions during winter; and, if so, will he state his decision?

MR. BRYCE: The matter to which the hon. Member refers is still receiving my careful consideration, and I am in communication with my right hon. Friend, the President of the Local Government Board, with a view of devising some efficient means of warning householders of the steps to be taken to prevent domestic boiler explosions in winter. No definite decision as to the precise means to be adopted has yet been arrived at.

## WINDING-UP OF PUBLIC COMPANIES.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been given to the Treasury letter of 23rd January 1893, stating the opinion of the Treasury that alterations should be made in the instructions of the Board of Trade to official receivers, and that a Committee should be appointed to investigate the question in all its bearings, and to advise as to the limits within which the action of the Department should be restricted, and to the memorial to the Lord Chancellor, dated November 1894, of bankers and merchants in agreement with that letter; and whether Her Majesty's Government will agree to the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to make the investigation suggested by the Treasury?

MR. E. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is intended that any action should be taken in consequence of the memorial addressed in November, 1894 to the Lord Chancellor, and signed by 125 leading bankers and merchants, which memorial requested that effect should be given to the views of the Treasury on the subject of the winding-up of public companies; and whether any instructions have been given to the official receivers not to act as permanent liquidators in any case unless the parties interested are unable to find a competent representative of their interests elsewhere?

MR. BRYCE: Subsequently to the letter of 23rd January 1893, the whole subject to which it related was considered by a Departmental Committee, presided over by Sir J. Rigby, which took evidence at considerable length, and whose Report was presented, in due course, to both Houses of Parliament. The Treasury and the Board of Trade accept the view of the meaning of the Statute which will be found in that Report, and the Treasury authorised the expenditure necessary to give effect to it. The practice of the Board of Trade is in accordance therewith. There does not, therefore, seem to be any necessity for an inquiry by a Select Committee.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES, arising out of the answer, asked whether the Board of Trade had acted or had neglected to act on the recommendation of the Committee; that the official receivers should be instructed to take all reasonable means to discourage their functions as permanent liquidators; whether, as a matter of fact, since the Report was received, the official receiver in a particular case, had not acted as official liquidator; and whether he had not, contrary to a specific recommendation, borrowed a sum of a million-and-a-quarter in order to carry on the company.

Mr. BRYCE admitted that the practice of the Board of Trade had varied. As regarded the particular case alluded to, what was done was done under the orders of the Committee.

Mr. BOULNOIS asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury still adhered to the objection to the existing system contained in the letter sent by himself on January 23rd, 1893?

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT: Certainly, so far as I know, the Treasury hold the same opinion.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES: Well, then, do the Board of Trade act upon it?

Mr. BRYCE: The Board of Trade are acting in accordance with the Report of the Committee, which is subsequent to the letter of the Treasury.

## THE OFFICE OF WOODS AND FORESTS.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, when the Government intend to appoint a Commissioner of Woods and Forests in the place of Sir Nigel Kingscote?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt, Derby): I am informed that the Queen's pleasure has been taken upon this appointment, and it will be announced immediately.

## GAMBLING IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES.

Mr. E. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government have now received any information in reference to any legislation or other steps to be taken by the United States of America, or any of the Governments of European countries to prohibit gambling in agricultural commodities; whether the Government have given any consideration to this important question; and whether they intend proposing any legislation on the subject during the present Session?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Papers containing this information were issued yesterday. (Commercial, No. 2, 1895, C. 7,645.) I do not expect the Government will be able to propose legislation on this subject during the present Session.

## SCOTCH GRAND COMMITTEE.

Mr. J. G. WEIR: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he intends to move for the appointment of a Scotch Grand Committee; and whether arrangements will be made to push the Crofters Bill through its various stages without delay?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: I am unable at present to say when the Government will be able to move for the appointment of a Scotch Grand Committee. I hope that the Government will be able to do so when we have made further progress with Scotch business, as I trust we shall do to-day. In regard to the Crofters' Bill, we shall push it through its various stages as fast as we can.

## THE NAVAL WORKS BILL.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) asked on what day the Naval Works Bill Committee would be taken.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQER: I hope, Sir, on Monday.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL trusted it would be put down as an early Order.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER: Yes, Sir, I hope so.

## GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER gave notice that, on Monday next, he would submit a Motion for giving further time to the Government for Government business. He would put down the terms of the Motion to-night, but he might state generally that it would be on the same conditions as those which were granted to the Government before Easter.

### MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT BILL.

On Motion of the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER,

Bill read 2°

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On the Order for the Adjourned Debate on the Motion for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Crofters' Acts,

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir **George Trevelyan**, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said: It will be well we should inquire how the leading principles laid down by Parliament in 1886 have worked, before we consider how those principles may be more carefully carried out by amended legislation. Have the Crofters' Acts been a blessing to the districts to which they have been applied or have they been the reverse? Now, on this point, the Government are able to give a straight and impartial opinion to the House. A Commission has lately been appointed, drawn from all Parties in politics and from gentlemen in various callings, and this Commission has, in the most unqualified manner, reported very strongly in favour of the operation of the Crofters' Acts. On that favourable opinion I am quite prepared to base the Bill. Everyone who knows the Highlands knows this favourable verdict is well deserved. How did the Act find the Highlands, and what did it make of them? The crofter had no security of tenure. In the house he had built, the farm he had improved, he had no property whatever recognised by the law. Again, he had no protection against arbitrary increase of rent. He was overwhelmed with arrears, which he could not pay or ever hope to pay. More than that, he was confined within his small and sometimes diminishing holding. The hills on which the black cattle of his fathers fed were not for him. He earnestly desired, and in vain, to be allowed not to appropriate or invade, but to lease, at a full rent, grazing land which would enable him to utilise his crops by feeding stock, and keep his stock first, and then, perhaps, his family, from starving. And, as the outcome of all this, the people were first miserable, then discontented, then turbulent, at last openly defiant of the law. I think none of these propositions will be disputed, nor will it be disputed that from the moment the Crofters' Commission appeared in the Highlands all these evils began to mend. The first fair rents were fixed in December 1886. Since that date more than 14,000 holdings have been visited and dealt with. Besides that, a large number of rents have been voluntarily reduced by landlords. More than 1,250,000 acres have been visited and settled by the Commission. The rents have been reduced from £73,000 a year to £52,000 a year. The arrears were £180,000, and of these £122,000 have been cancelled, and the rest may fairly be said to have been paid. The reductions granted on excessive rents and the extinction of the burden of hopeless arrears have brought about among the tenants a widespread feeling of satisfaction and contentment, and have enabled thousands of crofters to make a new start, with a sense of having been fairly treated, and with legitimate hopes for the future never entertained before. That is the case as to fair rents. The provision for the security of tenure has had a marked effect on the moral and material welfare of the crofters. It has fostered in them a spirit of independence and manhood. It has led to the better cultivation of the holdings, and it has led to the erection of a great number of excellent houses and farms, of a more healthy and permanent description than ever were erected in the old days of insecurity. That is what it has done for the tenant, and it has likewise done a good deal for the landlord. By the nominal sacrifice of a proportion of rent not greater than Lowland landlords and landlords in England have been obliged to give on account of economic causes, the crofter landlords have been saved from a state of friction and of actual hostility with their tenants. Instead of struggling with their tenants for a rent which the latter were unable to pay, and for arrears which they were still less able to pay, they have now a right to demand, and in the great majority of districts quite readily obtain, the new rents and the remains of the arrears. The result has been that the tenants and the landlords have gained, and that the State have gained also, for the old state of semi-rebellion that formerly existed in the Highlands has passed away, and the old scandals are a thing of the past. The crofting counties under the operation of the Act are as quiet as Cumberland or Surrey. I will now go to the provisions of the Bill; and I will deal first with that part of it that relates to the extension of holdings. Parliament sanctioned that principle in 1886. The immemorial industry of the Highlands is a combination of arable farming with grazing, and it is in order to enable the crofter to have the indispensable mountain grazing that Parliament accepted the strong, and perhaps in these days new, principle of compulsory leasing. Great hopes were entertained by the crofters and their friends from the operation of the Act, but, on the whole, those hopes have been disappointed. Between 1886 and 1893 there have been 217 applications for the enlargement of holdings by 2,450 crofters. There would doubtless have been a great many more if they could have been made with a fair chance of success. But only 57 holdings have been enlarged, and only 840 crofters benefited, and these figures include some extremely handsome arrangements that have been made by landlords voluntarily. This state of things has to be remedied, and the goodwill that Parliament has shown towards the crofters has to be carried into practical effect. Therefore the first step of the Government has been to appoint the Commission which has just brought its labours to a close. Once for all, I must say that I think the public owe a very great debt of gratitude to the gentlemen who have served on the Commission. It was a vast work—a sort of cadastral survey of six Scotch counties—and no one who knows anything about the nature of the work can possibly doubt that it has been quickly and thoroughly done. At what expense of time, and of health too, I am sorry to say, that extremely rough work was done may be guessed from the fact that there were 64 sittings of the Commission during the two years, and that the work of survey went on in many cases for a week after each sitting. The Commission ascertained that in the six counties 440,000 acres of land still remained which are suitable for the extension of existing holdings. How much of that land has been utilised for the purpose of the Act? Only 843 acres of arable land and 25,500 acres of pasture—not 27,000 acres in all, or not 5 per cent. of what might have been brought within the beneficial intentions of Parliament. In 1888, during the late administration, at my request a Report was called for in which reasons were given why the intentions of Parliament had been defeated, and why the enlargement of holdings could not be carried out with the same success as the fixing of fair rents. The Crofters' Commission were of opinion that one of the main causes that had prevented applications for the enlargement of holdings being lodged was to be found in the Act of Parliament, in Section 13, which fixed the scope of the words "available land." The first sub-section requires that land applied for must be "contiguous or near" to the land already occupied, and the second that the land applied for be "not under lease other than a sporting lease" for a term of years at the date of the passing of the Act. But besides that, since I have held my present office I have been continually inquiring of those who were able to inform me, and the result of my inquiries is that the Government propose to embody in the Bill certain clauses which they believe will make the Crofters' Act completely effective in this respect. In the first place it is proposed that in the case of pasture land the condition of its being contiguous to the crofter's holding shall be removed, but in the case of arable land that it shall be maintained. In the second place, the Bill removes the restriction against taking land in the case of a farming and grazing lease in existence at the time of the passing of the Act of 1886; that restriction does not exist in the case of a sporting lease. At present land can not be taken from a farm which is let at less than a £100 a year. Now agricultural rents have undoubtedly fallen 20 per cent., and perhaps more, in those parts of the Highlands, and the Government propose to recognise that fact and so allow land to be taken from a farm having rent of £80 instead of £100 a year. In the next place, under the existing law, if an application is made for the enlargement of a holding it can not be granted if the combined rent of the crofter's croft and his share of the grazing amounts to over £15. The limit appears to the Government to be unfortunate. Thirty pounds is the limit of the crofter's rent, and a farm of £30 a year is the sort of farm that the Government would like to see the crofters have, and therefore they propose to raise the limit for the combined holding from £15 to £30 a year. Under the Act land taken for the enlargement of a croft must belong to the same landlord, and there is a great deal to be said in favour of the provision, but it has been brought to the knowledge of the Government that there are cases in which the land has been alienated by the landlord in other than what might be called a *bonâ fide* manner for the purpose of evading his obligations under the Act. In order to carry out the spirit of the law the Government think that the matter should be dealt with. It can be no grievance at all to a man who has made other than a *bonâ fide* alienation of his land that they should make provision against his withdrawing himself from the scope of the law, and, as the Government hope by these new provisions that the enlargement of holdings will be very much increased, so there is a danger that this practice would increase likewise, and they think that it were well that Parliament should meet it on the threshold. We therefore propose that the vacant land of a holding shall be available for the enlargement of other holdings, and in case land is taken for the enlargement of holdings from a farmer under an existing lease we propose that the Commissioners shall have the same powers they now have in the case of a deer forest and shall be enabled to arrange the amount of the rent that has to be paid under that lease. Then we propose to do away with the necessity for five crofters applying for the enlargement of a holding, and to enable a single crofter to make the application. Finally, it is proposed by the Bill that, instead of having the beneficent powers of the Act of 1886 renewed by successive Expiring Laws Continuance Acts, those powers shall be made as permanent as the Commission itself is I now come to the provisions for improving the *status* of the crofter. A considerable number of people belonging to the crofter class and residing in crofter parishes are at present excluded from the benefits of the Act because they hold under lease. By the Act of 1887 leaseholders generally were admitted to the benefits of the Irish Land Acts, and the arguments which held good in the case of Irish leaseholders appear to me to hold good for the Highland leaseholders also. These men see their neighbours enjoying fixity of tenure and reduced rents in farms like their own in respect of the nature of the soils and the character of the cultivation, and yet they are possibly paying agricultural rents which are on a level with those which existed before the great fall in agricultural prices. These leasehold communities still form centres of great discontent, and the men who compose them command the sympathy of the immense majority of their neighbours of every class. These leaseholders, then, the Government propose to admit to the benefits of the crofter legislation. Then there is the case of the crofter who in 1886 held under a lease which has now run out, and who has been defenceless since its lapse. The general policy of Parliament in dealing with Ireland has been that no tenant should suffer because he happened at a particular moment to be under lease, and similarly under this Bill anyone who is under lease at the time of the passing of the Act will be admitted to the benefits. The framers of the Bill have been very careful to admit all the crofters, but do not wish to admit people who are not crofters. For this reason the Government refused in 1886 to have anything to do with free sale, and they still refuse, because under free sale farmers from all parts of the country might claim the benefits of the Act. But, as I have said, they are desirous to admit all genuine crofters, and as some genuine crofters do not fulfil the condition of actual residence on their holdings, the Bill proposes that a crofter residing within the crofting parish where his holding is situated shall be admitted to the benefits of the Act as being in *bonâ fide* occupation of his holding. The Bill makes the decision of the Crofters Commission final upon the question whether a man is a crofter or not. The next point for consideration is the question of common pastures. The Government hope for a greater extension of such pastures. In connection with them grave difficulties have arisen in the past, and if care is not taken there will be a development of such difficulties in the future. Where crofters enjoy the benefit of common pasture, the clever, energetic, and more wealthy man can, if he chooses, and often does, get more than his share of the common property, and the weaker and poorer men suffer in consequence. Parliament supplied a remedy in the Act of 1891 for the regulation of common grazing. In the case of existing grazing, the Commission, upon the request of two crofters, can under that Act appoint a mitttee to regulate the amount of stock which each crofter can put upon the land, and can frame rules for the management of the common pasture. It is not, however, in the power of the Commission when they grant common pasture for the first time to regulate the amount of stock or to appoint a committee. Then it is alleged that the more powerful crofters—and in remote parts of the country a single strong man can exert a very powerful influence upon his weaker neighbours—having put more than their fair share of stock on the grazing, prevent the poorer crofters from applying to have the grazing regulated. Again, persons who are not crofters, but inn-keepers, clergymen, schoolmasters, farmers over £30, often have shares and interests in crofters' grazings, and sometimes the landlord and the crofters have concurrent rights. These people can not by statute be brought within the scope of the Grazings Act. The Highlands and Islands Commission said in their Report—

> "From all these considerations it is abundantly plain that mere extensions of grazings, unaccompanied by the presence and enforcement of rules efficiently directed to the regulation of the stock and to the equitable maintenance of the grazing rights of each crofter interested, is not to be thought of."

It would be impossible to report in stronger words than those, and the Government have, in concurrence with the view of the Commission, inserted in the Bill a little code of Amendments which they hope will be of great value. They give power to the Commission, when making a new common pasture, to issue regulations as if it were an old one. With regard to existing grazings, they make the powers of the Commission to put the Grazings Act in force universal in all cases, and do away with the condition as to an application from the crofters. They allow the Commission to apply their regulations to the cattle of persons who are not crofters, but who have the common rights. One most valuable power of a kindred nature the Bill gives to the Commission. Prior to the Crofters Act local difficulties and disputes between crofters were dealt with by the landlord or his factor or ground officer, the decision being in the last resort enforced by the power of removing the crofter. That was a patriarchal and very effective system, but since the passing of the Act this irregular tribunal has disappeared, and in this Bill there is a clause giving the Commission power to settle these little controversies. I wish now to say a word about a particular clause. One of the conditions to be fulfilled by a crofter desiring to obtain the advantages of the Act is that he should not allow his dwelling to become dilapidated; but in Orkney and Shetland the crofters at present find it impossible to obtain stones with which to repair their buildings, and they ask to be allowed to pick stones on their own ground for the purpose, which they can do now because the landlord enjoys all the mineral rights, or to be allowed to take stones from the quarry where the crofters have been in the habit of getting stones. This the Government consider to be a very moderate request, and they propose to comply with it. Concluding my review of this group of questions, I desire to refer hon. Members to the recommendation of the Commission with regard to club farms. They said—

> "We desire to recommend a large extension of the 'club-farm' system. Under it crofters have no individual hill stocks, but only a joint ownership in the stock. Where this system prevails the crofters, or townships of crofters interested in a grazing, hold a common stock

duly proportioned to the 'carry' of the ground, with one central management for herding, breeding, clipping, selling, and dividing of profits, or, where necessary, imposing assessments required for the undertaking; as, for example, to pay wintering, shepherds' wages, and the general upkeep of buildings and fences. When this system is carried on honestly and properly, not only is the very most made of the ground, but the individual crofter is more certain of his or her return than otherwise, especially where as in the case of a widow, an invalid, or an occasional absentee, grazing interests fail to receive due attention."

In accordance with this recommendation we propose a Clause giving the Commission power, when they are satisfied that a club farm is the only way in which land can be worked, to provide for the management of the common grazing under regulations which carry out that principle. These then are the proposed Amendments of the Crofters' Act; and the question is whether the Act so amended ought to be confined to special districts or to be extended to all crofters wherever they may be. The Act of 1886 was founded upon what I may call the historical basis. That was the view of Parliament in 1886, and that is the view of the Government to-day. I may perhaps be allowed to read a few lines from the speech which I made when introduring the Bill of 1886:—

"What is the reason that Parliament is interested in this population? It is partly from respect of their character; it is partly from the interest which everyone who travels and reads takes in them, and the country in which they live; but it is, above all, that, as a population, they suffer from a very great grievance, which I hope is not irremediable. That grievance is that, taking the population as a whole, they are originally a population under circumstances entirely different from those which now exist, and that those circumstances were altered, by no fault of theirs, for the benefit of others."

Next, I propose to read a passage from a speech of Lord Salfsbury's, not because the noble Lord expressed in that speech any concurrence with the principles of the Crofters' Act, but because this passage contains the very best description which I have ever seen of the reasons given by the defenders of the Act for their attitude. The noble Lord, speaking at Edinburgh on November 30, 1888, said:—

"The Scottish Crofters' Bill was no Measure for which I am responsible, and I do not profess to admire it in all respects, but it had this particular note, it was not a disturbance of old long-established rights. The ground on which you interfered with the position of the Scottish crofters was that you said that up to a comparatively recent period they had held upon a tenure not the general tenure of these islands, and that that tenure had by lapse, by carelessness, by use, by encroachment, been converted into a condition of things wholly and unjustly disadvantageous to themselves. It was said that the old clannish tenure, which was very different from the ordinary law of landlord and tenant in this country, had slipped into the law of landlord and tenant, entirely to the advantage of the landlord, without any consideration for the valuable interest which the clansman formerly had in the land on which he lived. Well, that is a very fair argument, and the Act of Parliament, the Crofters' Act, 1886, which followed from it was that the rule of prescription observed generally in this country should be considerably extended—extended from 60 to 80 years—and that all who these 80 years had been in the condition of crofters should have their case specially considered. Well, that was a decision perfectly consistent with ordinary doctrines of the rights of property. Whether you thought it wise or thought it foolish, there was nothing in it which affected the rights of property in general."

*Sir George Trevelyan.*

It would be most unfair for me to claim that as Lord Salisbury's opinion on the subject of the crofters, but a better description of the principle on which the Crofters' Acts were founded could not be given. Parliament wished to legislate for the benefit of the old Highland population, and did its best carefully to define that population in the Act. The definition states that—

"a crofter is a tenant who resides in a holding of not more than £30 a year, situated in a crofting parish; and a crofting parish is a parish in which at the commencement of this Act there were, or had been within 80 years—"

—that was Lord Salisbury's 80 years—

"prior thereto holdings consisting of arable land held with a right of pasturage in common with others."

The task of ascertaining whether a parish was or was not a crofting parish was not a very difficult one to the men who sat on the Crofter Commission. In 1886 they began the great work by ascertaining where these crofting parishes were. The information necessary was very easily obtained in most cases. In a few instances the work was attended with difficulty, and special inquiry became necessary; but before long it was determined by them, and confirmed by the Secretary for Scotland, that out of 163 parishes in the seven counties, 151 were crofting parishes, and, as far as I know, no serious objection was ever taken to that decision. There will be no great difficulty, of that I am assured, in finding out in other counties besides the seven, which are crofting parishes and which are not; and I am assured likewise that in other counties in Scotland, in some cases many, and in some cases several, such parishes exist. Common sense shows that it must be so, because any one who knows anything about old Highland history knows that the conditions of old Highland life had no concern with boundaries of counties. The line between Aberdeenshire and Inverness-shire and the line between Perthshire and Argyllshire was not the line of demarcation between the clansmen and Lowland farmers. The line drawn in the Act was fixed for several reasons. In 1886 the work on hand was very heavy, and that part of the country which most stood in need of reform had to be first served. The seven counties on which the Commission reported, and in which crofting parishes lay most thickly and most universally, had to be first attended to. In the second place, and this is a most important point, the legislation was novel and strange, and most people doubted whether it would be successful, and hon. Members, in the most perfect good faith, expressed in the House doubts whether there was any serious amount of over-renting or any large amount of arrears in the Highlands; and, finally, the crofters in the counties which were excluded had been very quiet and peaceful. They had taken no part in any disturbances, and had made their representations only through the mouth of their Parliamentary representatives. What a difference there is now. The work in the old crofting counties is as good as done so far as rent and tenure are concerned, and the Act has proved an enormous success and an immense benefit. I do not wish to make any comment on the Irish Land Acts, but everybody must have noticed that there was a period of some years during which there was a great deal of disapprobation expressed with regard to them, though afterwards they were extended and generally approved. That never took place with regard to the Crofters' Act. From the very first it received the general approbation of that part of society acquainted with its operation. The great reduction that took place in rents, and the vast extinction of arrears, prove how very much the Act was wanted where it was applied; and the natural deduction to be drawn from that was that it was probably wanted where it had not been applied. And, finally, the crofters outside the seven counties have deserved the attention of Parliament by nine more years of law-abiding patience under their exclusion from the benefits of the Act. That they have been quiet is not a disqualification; it is a title to the recognition of the House. The Government propose to extend the Act to all counties in which there are crofting parishes. The additional counties named in the Bill are: Elgin and Nairn, Banff, Aberdeen, Kincardine, Forfar, Perth, and Bute and Arran. Those are counties in which, according to information which has reached us, crofting parishes exist. If it can be shown that such parishes exist elsewhere most careful inquiry will be made before the Committee stage; but for obvious reasons it would be most unadvisable to include in the Bill any counties or districts which, when the Bill comes to be worked, would be disappointed by finding that they contain no crofting parishes. This is a Bill for making legislation with respect to crofters as complete as Parliament can make it, and for extending it to crofters wherever they reside. It is a Bill for applying for the benefit of crofters nearly half a million of acres, which the Commission have ascertained to exist, and have carefully surveyed, for the extension of their holdings. It is a Bill which makes good on behalf of crofters not only every promise that has been made but every claim put forward inside or outside Parliament. It is a very important Bill; but it is one that is possible and practicable, unless we endeavour to embrace too much within it. At the end of their Report the Members of the Highlands and Islands Commission say:—

> "Mere extensions of existing holdings, or extensions of grazings, may be obtained without much difficulty and without raising any serious questions; but, on the other hand, we have not failed to notice that the transference of tenants and their establishment on new holdings might raise questions of public policy."

That is a most true, most statesmanlike conclusion. The question of forming new farms and of settling down in them people who are not farmers now, of what in Ireland was known by the name of "migration," would be an undertaking on new lines, of enormous magnitude, and which would require, in order to carry it out, vast sums of public money. To enter on such an undertaking in this Bill would be to endanger, even, I believe, to wreck and destroy all we hope to accomplish for the crofting population of the Highlands. On one point the friends of the crofters may be reassured. The Government do not intend to interfere with, and never dreamed of interfering with, the existence and efficacy of the Crofters' Commission. It has been suggested that the Commission should be abolished, and its duties transferred either to the Sheriff's Court or to the County or Parish Councils. The experience which the Commission has gained, the great and wide-spread confidence with which it is regarded, are qualifications and attributes of the greatest value to the public, and could never be recovered in the same measure by any other body if the continuity was once broken. The leader of the Opposition, on the Second Reading of the Irish Land Bill, expressed a wish that the Irish land machinery could be rendered less costly. It is not too much to say that the proceedings before the Crofters' Commission could hardly be made cheaper than they are at present. Fortunate, indeed, was the country in securing the services of such men as Sheriff Brand and his colleagues, including Mr. Mackenzie, the Secretary, in order to set on foot a system which, entirely new and strange only nine years back, is now regarded with gratitude by those who have the benefit of it, and with hope and envy by those who are still excluded from it. I trust that hon. Members, in approaching this question, will give a thought to the public opinion of those counties whose interests are concerned in it. Is there one of those counties opposed to the provisions of the Bill? I doubt whether any candidate or member of any Party for any county from the Pentland Firth to the river Forth could be found who would not say that among the people whom he represents there is only one feeling and one sentiment, and that is, that the boon which in 1886 Parliament intended to be given to the crofters should be made complete and permanently secure, and should be extended to everyone who holds the position and bears the name of crofter. I hope the House will allow this Bill to be read a first time.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I do not think that this is the occasion upon which it would be desirable, or in accordance with the convenience of the House, that I should attempt any main survey of the legislative project which the right hon. Gentleman has laid before us; but his speech naturally suggests some comment, and there are some questions which it may be to the convenience of all interested in the question should be made and should be asked. The right hon. Gentleman began his observations by a survey of the effect of the Crofters' Commission, in which he saw no dark spots at all. I do not at all wish to minimise the good results that may have occurred, and I believe did occur, in many parts of the country from the Crofters' Act; but it is a melancholy fact known to every one who has read the Report of the Commission, that in that part of the Highlands which gave most trouble to the Government of the day, where the economic problems connected with the crofter question press most severely both upon the populations concerned and upon politicians and Statesmen who have considered their case, the effect of the Crofters Act has not been all that its authors had hoped. There is an ominous paragraph in the Report of the Commission which gives an account of the condition of the Island of Lewis. From this it appears that if peace is given to that part of the Highlands, and if the law is not openly defied, it is none the less true that legal debts are not paid, and the evils of overcrowding and the sub-division have gone on unchecked. The arrears which the Crofters' Commission adjudged to be just arrears, and which ought to be paid to the landlords, remain at the present day for the most part unpaid; and I am not aware it has been in the power of the landlords to put any machinery in motion by which those just obligations may be enforced. After all, it is not our business to-day to discuss the exact degree in which the Crofters' Act may have succeeded or failed. What we have to deal with are the proposals of the Government which they have made with regard to the population in the six crofting counties, and in some others as well. The first observation I have to make is that this extension of area is one that necessarily raises very grave issues indeed. I perfectly understand the position of the Government. They say—

> "You have given to the Crofters in six counties in Scotland certain immunities; there is a population situated precisely as they are but beyond the arbitrary borders of the six counties to which the original Act was confined; you cannot in justice or in policy exclude from the benefits of the legislation those persons who resemble them in every other respect except the accident of locality."

I admit the force of the argument; but you cannot avoid in legislation some hard and fast line, though a line in every part of its course cannot be logically justified. Have the Government contemplated this result? It appears that if one tenant exists outside the six counties in a parish who is able to prove that for 80 years he has held, year by year, with the rights of grazing, a farm under £30 value, he not only gets the benefit of the Act himself, but he constitutes the parish in which he resides a crofting parish. When a crofting parish has been constituted by the action of one individual, everybody else in that parish, though they may only have come into it 10 years ago, though every improvement on their farm may have been made by the landlord, and though they may have a lease from the landlord—those persons, as I understand it under the Bill, will find themselves entitled to all the privileges of crofters, though they have not one single attribute characteristic of that class, except the attribute of living in a parish where there happens to be a crofter. If I have rightly interpreted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, I think he would agree that he has raised a question of very great difficulty, which will necessitate a great deal of discussion in the House, and will require most careful safeguarding in the Bill if it is not to lead to grave abuse and injustice. I pass now to the provision in the Bill which extends the Crofters' Act to the leaseholder—a provision which, in my opinion, is dangerous in itself, but which derives increased significance from the fact that the old limit of area has been abandoned by the Government. The Government have quoted, in justification of their action, arguments which show, as I understand, what was done by the late Government in the Act of 1887 with regard to Irish land. They appear to think that their action at the present time is on all fours with the action which we took seven years ago. That is an entire misconception of what was done in 1887 and what is proposed to be done now. It has been stated over and over again that we in 1887 were the people who first broke leases in Ireland. Leases were absolutely destroyed by the Land Act of 1881. What is the essence of a lease? The essence of a lease is this, that a man makes a contract with a landlord to hold land for a certain length of time at a certain rent, and at the end of the time to hand the land back to the landlord in the condition and in the circumstances in which he took it. Under the Act of 1881, with regard to land under lease in Ireland, the result was that when a lease fell in, the land was not handed back to the landlord in the condition in which it stood under the original leaseholder; on the contrary, it came under the Act of 1881, and was subject to all the limitations of ownership which that Act imposed on all owners. Leases were, therefore, destroyed; the essence of them was struck out by the Act of 1881, and all we did by the Act of 1887 was to carry out to its logical issue the process which had been begun, and put an end to a state of things which could not be justified, as far as I know, on any principle whatever. But the state of things in the Highlands is very different. The Crofters Act did not touch the position of the land when the lease came to an end. It was handed back to the landlord under the Act of 1892 in the same condition and under the same tenure as it was let to the tenant; and, therefore, if you wish to quote any analogy for the action you are taking with regard to leases, I point you to the action of the Land Act of 1881, and not to the action which was taken in 1887. I come to what may be described as the main provisions of the Bill, those, namely, which have to do with the extension of holdings. The first question I ask is whether the extension of the holding which the Government contemplate, except in the few particulars mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, is still subject to the limitations of the

Crofters Act of 1886? The right hon. Gentleman contemplates that land shall be taken from farms which are a going concern, and shall be transferred from those farms to the crofters. That may result in no damage either to the landlord or to the tenant. In that case the question of compensation will not come in; but suppose that it results in damage both to the landlord and to the tenant, or to one or the other, what provision or compensation is to be made, or is the transference to the crofters not to take place? I believe the original words of the Crofters' Act of 1886 provide that—

> "if the land forms any part of any farm, whether subject to lease or not, unless the Crofters Commission are satisfied that the part proposed to be assigned. . . . can be so assigned without material damage to the letting value of the remainder,"

the Commission shall not contemplate any action. Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether that provision is abrogated by the new Bill, or whether it still stands? If it stands, it is, I think, manifest in a large proportion of cases that the Crofters Commission will be powerless to increase the size of the holdings. If it is abrogated, the right hon. Gentleman will have to provide compensation out of some fund not yet specified by which the landlord or the tenant may be recouped for the injury thus inflicted upon him. That is a very important question, and I hope before the Debate closes he will let us know how it stands.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: I think I stated actually all the changes made.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I now understand, then, that there will be no power on the part of the Crofters Commission to enlarge any holding by the addition to it of land, if the transference of that land in any way injures the letting value of the farm. In that case the question of compensation falls to the ground, and it is also evident that many of the hopes founded on the proposals of the Government are destined to disappointment. The next matter to which I desire to call attention is the question of the class whom you expect to benefit by your procedure. Everybody knows that in the main the difficulty will be as to grazing pasture and not arable land. There may be here and there a case of the latter kind, but all of us who have knowledge of the affair must be aware that in the main the questions we have to consider are those which have reference to the increase of grazing land. Arable land can be made useful as to labour, but grazing land is absolutely useless except to the possessor of stock; and I would venture to say that the persons who will benefit by the grazing are not the poor classes whose interests we all naturally especially desire, but crofters who are already extremely well-to-do persons, whose existing stock exceeds the amount of grazing land which they possess. The only way by which we can carry out the object we aim at is by providing machinery by which the poor crofter can be supplied with the stock necessary, but the Government have made no proposal of that kind, and I think they were well advised not to do so, for they would have been plunged at once into a Serbonian bog. Yet, though I think an omission of this kind exremely natural under the circumstances, it makes their Bill almost valueless for the very class whose condition they and we desire to improve. Who is it among the population of the Highland counties whom you most desire to aid? It is the cotter, and it is the small crofter, whose condition differs hardly at all from that of the cotter; and, as I venture to say, there is not a line, there is not a word, in these proposals of the Government which in the slightest degree will benefit either the cotter or the small crofter. There are three problems connected with the Highland land question which have been the cause of serious anxiety, pain, and perplexity to everyone connected with that country. There is the problem of over-population. There is the problem of the cotter, and there is the problem of the poor crofter. Can you do anything for the problem of over-population? I am not saying—I am not suggesting—that I have any legislative scheme by which that problem can be solved; but it appears to me that to bring forward a Bill for the benefit of the Highlands and leave all these things outside, absolutely untouched, either by the surgical knife or any alleviating medicine, is not statesmanship, and it is likely to lead to a great deal more disappointment than any benefits likely to follow from the proposals of the Government. I have mentioned the case of the Island of Lewis. I do not lay blame on any individual or on any class; but if you leave untouched this central blot you will have done absolutely noting. ["No, no!"] I think the condition of the Highlands is illustrated by the Island of Lewis, and this Bill does nothing for the Lewis; perhaps no Bill can do anything for the Lewis. What will the overcrowded population of that island gain from proposals to extend their holdings when there is no available grazing land? What will they gain by a proposal to give them additional pasture for their stock when they have no stock to put on the pasture? What will the cottiers gain from a Bill in which the word "cotter" does not appear at all? I give the Government credit for good intentions. I am far from saying that there are no proposals in their Bill which will not benefit some parts of the population of the counties to which in the main the Bill refers; but as a solution of the present question—which is how to improve the poor Highlanders most deserving of our sympathy and support—I fear, unless I am greatly mistaken in the purport of the speech, it will be found that we shall fail in the object we have in view, and that the position of the people will not be in any tittle benefited by the proposal of the Government.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, he was sure his right hon. Friend must have felt, in introducing this Bill, great satisfaction in reflecting on the success which had attended the present Act as far as it had gone. They had had the highest and most emphatic testimony as to the excellent working of the Act. The crofters under it had improved their holdings and built houses; they had made new men of themselves. If there had been no further achievement he thought his right hon. Friend might well congratulate himself. As to the Island of Lewis, it was a dark spot. It was an object-lesson, showing the absolute necessity of the extension of the Crofters Act. The people wanted more land. They were cribb'd, cabin'd, and confined in small villages, and they were crying out with a voice which was to be answered now, "More land." There was land which might well be devoted to the crofters of Lewis. The islanders were a very kind people, as anyone who travelled in the island knew. The women were handsome, the men strong and vigorous, and the children particularly healthy, and if such people were satisfied with their conditions of life then all he could say was that they were easily satisfied. These fine people should be allowed to live in their native country, and not driven abroad to live in an uncongenial climate under conditions that they did not understand. He should be glad to see the principle of fair rent and fixity of tenure extended to every part of Scotland. The fair rent should be fixed by travelling Commissioners—men of the same type as those on the Crofters' Commission; and as to the second principle nothing was so vital in the present condition of agriculture as stability of tenure. He was bound to say that he confessed to a shadow of a flicker of disappointment such as had been indicated by the Leader of the Opposition—namely, that the benefits of the Act had not been applied to almost all holders in the north of Scotland. In Aberdeenshire, for instance, they had a larger number of small holdings than in almost any other part of Scotland; and he would like to ask whether it would not be possible to admit small holders in the north, who carried out one or two of the crofters' conditions, to participate in the benefits of the present measure. Perhaps this suggestion might be taken into consideration at some future time, and thus mitigate some little of the disappointment which might be experienced in the north when the people in that part found that only persons living under all the crofting conditions were to come under the present measure. They could not expect it to regenerate all the human conditions of farming, which, as every one was aware, were bad enough, even on large farms; and it was even more difficult to get a living out of a small holding. If the suggestions which had been made could be given effect to in the Bill, it would infuse hope into the small holders in Scotland, and he should predict for the Bill in the future no less success than had attended the Act in the past.

**Dr. G. B. CLARK** (Caithness) said, that he had to congratulate the Secretary for Scotland on his Bill, and he also had to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on the suggestions which he had made. He hoped that his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland would accept those suggestions. The class of leaseholders under £100 would be much benefited by inclusion in the Bill. Nine years ago the present Duke of Sutherland—the largest crofting landholder in Scotland—strongly urged upon the Government of the day to include leaseholders in the Crofters' Act. The answer of the Law Officer of the day was that, although he recognised that these men had a strong claim, still Parliament had not come in and broken contracts. Since then, however, 150,000 contracts —some of them leases for 99 years—had been broken in Ireland by the Act of the late Government. The Leader of the Opposition said that they would have come under the ordinary Irish Land Act when their leases expired. Yes, if they had been living in 80 or 90 years' time. At the end of that time, when the leases expired, the then holder would, no doubt, have got the benefit. The same reasons which now compelled the Secretary for Scotland to bring in this Bill were similar to those which led to the Irish Land Bills—the poor people on the land were a cause of disturbance. In Sutherlandshire, the Queen's writ did not run, and there was not sufficient local police force in the county to enable it to run. An application was made to bring in some foreign police from Glasgow or Edinburgh. This was refused, as being a grossly unjust thing to attempt to get rid of people, and to try to make them pay impossible rents. He did not blame some of the men who had been trying to get those rents; some of them were trustees, and were obliged, as such, to do so by the terms of their trust deeds. On the other hand, they had impecunious people who were trying to live, and who were unable to grant reductions. In this state of things, it was right that the Government should step in now. The same state of things existed in Ireland when the late Government brought in their Bill and broke all contracts in Ireland. Experience had shown that these changes were necessary, but he thought that the Secretary for Scotland would require to go further, and to take in a class of men whom he had not mentioned, namely, those who did not hold under the existing Act. Undoubtedly, the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition was a most important one: What was to be done in the congested districts; what was to be done for the poor crofter; what was to be done for the poor cotter? In the island of Lewis, they had an average rental value of under £3 a year for each holding, and if they were to be allowed their grants rent free, they would only benefit to the extent of about a shilling per week. What was wanted was to get rid of the deer forests and large farms in Lewis, and then it would be possible to do the poor people good. He and his friends had tried to do something of the kind about ten years ago, but they were unable to accomplish their object. Changes had, however, occurred since then. They had now local bodies: Parish Councils and County Councils; and what, he asked, was to hinder the Imperial Government from lending to those local bodies money which they could see invested for the purpose which he had indicated? All the difficulties had been met, and the plans had been laid down under the Act of last year. He did not propose to discuss now what was in the present Bill, but he would say that, in his opinion, it would require modification. He thought that the Government would do well to follow the lead which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had given them, and do something to solve this problem fairly, fully, and completely. It was worth remarking that the people of Scotland had been able to get money from a Conservative Government more easily than from a Liberal Government; but whereas, in the past, the aid had been more to the landlord, it could now be given more to the people, through the medium of the local bodies. Scotchmen did not generally spend money in a foolish fashion, and they would not err in being extravagant. If the Leader of the Opposition would aid the Government in passing this measure and making it effectual, Scotchmen would be obliged to the right hon. Gentleman.

**Sir D. H. MACFARLANE** (Argyll) thought that hon. Members had better reserve discussion till the Bill was in their hands. He concurred with the last speaker in being extremely pleased to hear the open statement of the Leader of the Opposition, because he gathered from the right hon Gentleman's remarks that the Government were not going far enough in their legislation. A little time had brought about many changes. He remembered quarrelling many nights with the right hon. Gentleman in 1886 on the Crofter question, but he was now glad to think that nine years had wrought a change in the right hon. Gentleman's views. He hoped that hon. Members would now allow the Bill to be brought in, for there would be plenty of time to discuss it on the Second Reading and in Committee.

*Dr. D. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire) said he was very glad to join in congratulating the Secretary for Scotland on being able at last to bring in this long-looked for Bill, which, however, would have been brought in earlier but for the action of the Leader of the Opposition. While on the one hand he was willing to admit that the Bill was a good one as far as it went, he was bound to say, on the other, that it fell far short of what the Highland people had a right to expect. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite had remarked, it did not touch at all the real sore in the Highland question, and he could not but regret that the Secretary for Scotland, whose sympathy with the Highland people was well known, had omitted the crucial point of the matter from the Bill. The Bill extended legislation, no doubt, by admitting the leaseholders to the benefits of the Act; but that the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to do last year. It was nothing new. It also made some minor amendments of the present Act as far as the parishes and townships were concerned, and it likewise proposed to extend the benefits of the Act to other counties. But what about the enlargement of holdings to the people who had too little land to live upon, and to the cotters who had no land at all? What were those cotters? They were simply crofters without land. They had been spoken of as outsiders, and as unconnected with the crofters; but they were men of exactly the same class, who had either been evicted from the land they occupied, or who had been unable to get any land at all. He would point out to those who were interested in the Imperial question of the public services, that many of these cotters were old soldiers and sailors who had served their country well, and had returned to the land of their fathers with the hope of getting a little land to cultivate in order to end their declining years in comfort. But they were denied this by an ungrateful country. They need only look to the splendid work which the Highland soldiers were now doing in the mountain passes of India for the relief of Chitral, to see what the character of these men were, and he thought they deserved sympathy and consideration when they returned to their homes. But without regard to their heroic services, they were denied on their return even sufficient ground in which to cultivate the necessaries of life. It was a fact that thousands of Highland people were without the necessaries of life, because they were denied the land wherewith to cultivate them, a condition of things which was unworthy of a country which called itself Christian. Too much money was spent on the public services. If less money were spent on the Navy and Army and Civil Services; if fewer pensions were voted by that House to people who little required them; there would be money left to provide the Highland people with land enough to support their families by their own industry. It had been shown that when those people got fixity of tenure, compensation for improvements, and fair conditions they were not only industrious and paid their rents, but built better houses and surrounded themselves with better sanitary conditions. They had been called indolent. Why? Because, before the Crofters' Act was passed, whenever they reclaimed any land from the bog, or from the mountain-side, and made a little crop to grow upon it, the landlord put up the rent immediately to an exorbitant extent, and thus took away all encouragement from the poor people to persevere. If they refused to pay, or were unable to pay rent, they were turned adrift by the landlord. Many of these men were the cotters to whom reference had been made, but the right hon. Gentleman had made no attempt whatever to do anything for them. The

Report of the Highland Commission, which had been so long delayed, was simply valueless so far as the present Bill was concerned. But that Report showed that there was land enough in the Highlands—and more than enough—to give a reasonable croft to every industrious cotter. The Commission were able to schedule nearly 2,000,000 acres of land which were available for crofter holdings, and which would be greatly benefited by occupation. What was to be done with that land? No practical suggestion whatever was made on the matter by the right hon. Gentleman—no suggestion to increase, or enlarge, the holdings. Yet, there could be no solution of this question until some proposal of the kind was made. Moreover, there were estates in the Highlands suited to crofters which had been altogether passed over by the Commission; not an acre of these estates had been scheduled. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give some explanation of this fact. He did not intend to insinuate partiality or favouritism, but it was an unfortunate coincidence that certain Members high in the Government should be the owners of some of those estates. Then the important question relating to the congested districts, which was at the bottom of much of the distress in the Highlands, had been passed over, and the question of migration also had not been referred to. Several years ago proposals were made by the late Government to migrate a portion of the Highland people to Columbia as a remedy for the congestion, and a grant of £150,000 was voted for that purpose. Where was that money now? He believed that the whole of it except £5,000 or £6,000 was still in the Treasury. Why could not that money be laid out, in a practical and business-like way, for the relief of the congested districts in the Highlands? But, after all, would it not be a great mistake from an Imperial point of view, to emigrate those people—who were in many respects the backbone of the population—especially while there was land enough in the country for their industry and maintenance? Was it not the far wiser course to make an effort to provide them with land, since they were willing to till it, and to pay fair rent for it? Was it not obvious that this course was better for the country, for the landlord, and for the people as a whole? He hoped the Secretary for Scotland, or the Lord Advocate, would offer some explanation on the points he had raised, and would give some hope that the Bill would be made one which would be really worthy of acceptance by the people of the Highlands, who had waited so long and patiently for it.

*MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Buteshire), in common with other Members who had addressed the House, desired to reserve the observations he intended to make on the Bill until he had had an opportunity of seeing its provisions. He wished, on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, to express the hope that ample time would be given by the Government for the consideration of those provisions before it was brought up for Second Reading, especially in view of the fact that the maps in connection with the Highland Commission had not yet been supplied to hon. Members. He thought there was very little connection between the right hon. Gentleman's Bill and the Report of the Commission, and even in regard to the enlarging of the holdings he did not gather from the right hon. Gentleman's statement that this would be a help. He thought it was noticeable that what might be called the case against deer forests, so far as the Report of the Commissioners went, had broken down. They pointed out that even if the whole of the land that was given to deer forests was made over to the people it would only be a temporary alleviation of the evils from which they suffered. The part of the Bill with which he certainly had sympathy was that which dealt with the enlargement of holdings. No doubt the position of the cotter as regarded the enlargement, or even the creation of holdings was at present a little ambiguous, but he was content to wait until they saw the provisions of the Bill. He wished, however, to sound one note of warning with regard to the taking of land which was at present under lease, for the enlargement of holdings. Of course, the present Act only applied to leases current from the date of the passing of the Act. It was all very well to commit to the determination of the Crofters' Commission the question as to whether it would or would not do harm, on the whole, to take part of the land which was under an existing lease, but that would do very little good to the landlord and tenant without a provision for apportionment. There was an actual case where some land which crofters wished to have added to their holdings had been under lease at the passing of the Act, and the lease had expired about a year after the passing of the Act. At that time there had been no application made by the crofters, and the landlord had naturally re-let the land to a tenant under a 19-years lease. Then an application was made by the crofters to have this land given to them: the Court held that as the phraselogy of the Act only applied to leases current from the date of the passing of the Act, the lease was no embargo against the land being so allotted, and it was allotted. But there was no provision in the Act as to apportionment, and therefore the unfortunate landlord and tenant found themselves in this position—that part of the land was taken and, of course, a fair rent fixed as between crofter and landlord. Not unnaturally, the farmer from whom the land had been taken did not take the same view as the valuer of the Crofter Commission had done, and there was no means of extraction from the *impasse* into which they had got. The practical value consequently was reduced, and the sum total got by the landlord afterwards was not equal to the sum total before. He should therefore scrutinise the Bill somewhat jealously, to see whether there was a practical provision for making it impossible to take land unless there was also some provision for apportionment. The application of the Act to leaseholders was a difficult and delicate matter, and he was not at present inclined to view the proposition with favour. The right hon. Gentleman had founded his claim for this extension on what he called historical reasons. He understood that the peculiar position the crofters were in was—first, that they were people who with their predecessors had lived from time immemorial upon the same spot, and whose right was, as a matter of fact, really coeval with that of the landlord; and secondly, that they were people who, as a whole, had undoubtedly made their own improvements, in which respect their case was analogous to that of the Irish tenants. If the leaseholders could say the same thing, undoubtedly the logic would be irresistible, but he asserted they could not. There might be particular crofting parishes in which the leaseholders could say so, but there were also numberless leaseholders in Scotland, in parishes called crofting parishes, of whom it could not be said that they had occupied their holdings from time immemorial, or had made their own improvements. It would be easy to instance whole estates where the improvements had not been so made. Therefore the historical basis of the right hon. Gentleman entirely failed. He understood it was not proposed to alter the definition of a crofting parish, and it would be remembered that the existence of two or three crofters' holdings stamped the crofting character on the whole parish; in such cases everyone whose rent was under £30 would be admitted to the benefits of the Act. Was this not an attempt to introduce the thin edge of the wedge, and to make a Land Court and a Land Bill for Scotland altogether, an aim which the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire had avowed? Such an attempt would undoubtedly be resisted by that side of the House. A Land Court to fix rents was nothing else than a system of dual ownership, and the only possible justification for such a system was, that the improvements had been made by the tenant himself. In Scotland such a state of things did not exist except with this very limited class, and he feared that, under the guise of seeking to benefit this limited class, they would be really introducing a system which would be not only unjust, but radically bad. These remarks had all the more weight when they considered the proposition in the Bill to extend the parts of the country to which the Crofters' Act applied, for the extension of the benefits of the Act to leaseholders would be more far-reaching in the added counties than in the counties to which the Act at present applied. He did not know whether any parish in Bute could be held to be a crofter parish. Although there might possibly be an instance of a person holding from year to year with common pasture which would entitle the Crofter Commission to declare it a crofting parish, yet taking the tenantry of parishes altogether—and there were only three parishes in

Bute—they were certainly not people who had inhabited from time immemorial on a year to year tenure. They had been under leases, and they were persons who had had much done for them by an exceedingly generous landlord. And no one admitted this more than themselves. Arran, on the other hand, was a part of the world where holdings were very much smaller. His right hon. Friend asked whether any Member for these counties would say they did not look forward to the application of a Bill with hope. But last year the hon. Baronet who sat for one of the Divisions of Glasgow, introduced a Bill to amend the Crofters' Act by including Bute therein. There were two Petitions—one in favour of the Bill, and one against it. The fact that spoke for itself was, that the signatures in the Petition against very largely exceeded in number the signatures in favour of the Bill. He himself did not attach great weight to Petitions one way or the other. Still there was the fact. Personally he had no doubt whatsoever that the passing of a Crofters' Act for Bute, so far as it was applicable to Arran, would not be of any practical importance to Arran holders. He said this not upon general grounds, but because anyone who knew anything about Arran knew that the conditions of Arran were exceedingly peculiar. Although they had an historical connection, so to speak, with the Highlands, and many of them had held from year to year for a long time, yet the conditions of the Arran crofter were quite different from those of the crofter in the West Highlands or the North, because he had come to be a person who did not maintain himself by the ordinary arts of the crofter, but by house-letting to the inhabitants of Glasgow and Paisley. When they came to the application of tenure to an island like that, it would be found that, practically, the islander would gain much more from liberal treatment, and no competition from other people, than he would gain under any Crofters' Act, by which the island would be opened up to others besides himself. He said that because he did not wish hon. Members to think his mouth was sealed about his own constituency. He took a larger view—as to how this Bill would affect Scotland. He had indicated what he believed to be the chief sources of danger in these two proposals which his hon. Friend had embodied in the Bill, and he associated himself with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in saying that he did not think these proposals, such as they were, touched that which they all considered was the real Highland difficulty and the real Highland grievance.

Mr. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, he wished to thank the Secretary for Scotland for introducing this Bill. But it should have been introduced two and a half years ago. The Highland people had not been fairly treated in the matter. Since the advent of the present Government to power many small tenants holding under leases had been turned out of their holdings. This would have been avoided if the promises and pledges given by the Liberal Leaders had been carried out, The Secretary for Scotland said the Crofters' Act of 1886 had been a blessing to the people. He agreed. In many remote parts of the Highlands dwellings of turf had been replaced by houses of stone, with slate roofs kept in nice order—very different from the sort of places in use before the passing of the Act. He was indebted to the Secretary for Scotland for doing what he had done for the Highland people. But it was a great mistake to suppose that the Highland people were contented. There was great discontent, but it was slumbering—waiting for the fulfilment by the Liberal Leaders of their pledges. He was glad the Leader of the Opposition had spoken as he had, and he hoped that he and his colleagues would be found supporting any Amendments that might be proposed for the inclusion of the small crofters in the Bill. The people of whom in 1886 the Lord Advocate of the day spoke as a "landless class," were crofters who had been evicted. The Secretary for Scotland had talked of the kindly feeling that had been promoted between landlord and tenant in the Highlands since the passing of the Crofters' Act. But in Lewis bitter hatred existed towards the landlords in consequence of the brutal treatment of the Highland people by grasping, avaricious landlords. Rack-renting had gone on to a scandalous extent. Fixity of tenure would be one of the greatest boons conferred by the Bill. The improvements made by the tenants were not considered by the

Crofter Commission, and the result was they were charged rents which they were unable to pay. If the recommendations of the Crofter Commission in 1886, and what was proposed by the Conservative Government had been carried out, deer forests and large grazing farms would now have been in the possession of the people for the benefit of tbe people. The Conservative Government set aside £150,000 to promote the emigration of crofters from Lewis. It was strange that a Conservative Government should have been more liberal in providing funds for the Highland people than a Liberal Government. He hoped the Liberal Leaders would do what they could to induce the Chancellor of the Exchequer to open his purse strings more in favour of the Highland people. There was a large population in Lewis. The land which was devoted to deer forests and grazing farms—the former of which were in the hands of a few individuals from London and America—should be in the possession of the people. This Bill would not settle the Highland question. He for one should be sorry to see a repetition of what happened in the time of the Liberal Government in 1884, when gunboats were sent to shoot down poor honest people. One gunboat was lost. They did not want to have gunboats lost in trying to coerce the Highland people. Let a Bill, based on the recommendations of the Deer Forest Commission, be introduced and not " a blind " like the present Bill, which was not based on those recommendations.

*Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) said, he must congratulate the Secretary for Scotland upon the Bill he had introduced, and the speech he had made; and he could hardly believe that the proposals now made would not be received with favour by the hon. Member who had just spoken when he came to see them in print. The Secretary for Scotland deserved the thanks of Members representing constituences in the north of Scotland for the way in which he had endeavoured to meet them with regard to crofters outside the Highland line by placing them in a position similar to that of crofters inside the line with regard to their obtaining the benefits of the Act. The point was pressed upon the Government in 1886, and there was still stronger reason for pressing it strongly now, because they had had a demonstration of the results that flowed from the operation of the Act. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman had seen fit to meet them, and trusted he would make sure that the terms of the Bill would really include the crofters of the North Eastern counties. One reason for pressing the point was—in this, as on a previous occasion, the right hon. Gentleman had laid considerable stress on what he called the historic basis of this legislation. In a certain sense that historic basis might be claimed for the crofters in the North-East as well as for those of the Western Highlands. The crofters of the north-east undoubtedly embarked in the work of reclamation considerably earlier than did the crofters of the Western Highlands. Therefore the period of 80 years, in the original Act, however well it might be adapted to the circumstances of the Western Highlands, might possibly be insufficient to meet the cases of crofters in other parts of the Highlands. The right hon. Gentleman should see whether in the original Act the definition of crofters and crofter parishes were fair definitions, and whether they would apply to crofters outside the line. If he was going to include leaseholders he would have to alter the definition of crofters in the Act; and if he was going to alter the Act in one direction, it might be hoped that he would alter it in another dircction. If the objection was taken that they were endeavouring to include men under a different form of tenure, he replied that they were not endeavouring to do that, but that they were seeking to include by this Bill two forms of Highland tenure, and to bring within the scope of the Act other forms of tenure than those which prevailed in the Western Highlands alone.

Mr. M. H. SHAW-STEWART (Renfrewshire, E.) said that, whatever opinions might be held as to the finding of the Commission of which he was a Member, it could not be said that this Bill was based upon their findings. The hon. Member for Bute had already dealt with the proposal to include leaseholders, and he would therefore content himself by making one remark. If he were a leaseholder on a well-managed crofter estate, he should not wish to change his position; but, if he were a leaseholder on a badly managed estate, he should probably be better off under the Act. It did not at all follow that leaseholders would be benefited by the change in their position which would be made by them coming under the Act. He certainly heard, with some surprise, that the provisions of the Bill with regard to grazing were of such modest dimensions; and he knew they would not satisfy the wishes—whether they were reasonable or not he did not say—of the great bulk of the Highland population. The Bill did not attempt to deal in any way with new holdings, and perhaps the question of providing new holdings was the most vital point in any scheme for giving more land for crofter occupation. He did not say it could easily be provided; but if it were the provision of it would operate in two ways—it would allow fresh land to be given to a certain number of crofters, and the granting of new holdings would relieve the congestion of certain districts. Whether or not they thought it advisable to institute new holdings, that was the chief question of interest to the Highland population, and had been so for some time past. But this Bill did not touch that point at all. The Bill dealt to a limited extent with the extension of grazing. As he understood, the present allocation of grazing remained, with this alteration—that grazing might be taken by the Commission which was not contiguous to the present holdings. That might work usefully, but it would be of limited application, because the extension of grazing to a township was of little use unless the new grazing were tolerably near to the holdings of the people you wished to benefit. Therefore, while the Bill would provide a little more grazing for certain districts, the whole would be but as a drop in the ocean. Coming to the proposal to reduce the limit of the farms from which grazing might be taken he could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on wishing to lower the £100 limit. It was of great importance to the Highlands that there should be moderate-sized farms, such as were represented by a rent of £100, and it would be detrimental to injure such farms by diminishing them. It would be useful to allow one man, instead of requiring five, to make an application for extension and to apply the grazing clause to all grazing in the future; but there would be difficulty in dealing with a class of men who were not legally crofters, and who had rights of grazing which could not be proved by law. The hon. Member for Inverness-shire had read the Report of the Commission rather largely; he had spoken of a million and a half or nearly two millions of acres having been reputed by the Commission as fit for crofter occupation. The Commission scheduled a little over 1,700,000 acres, but more than half a million of that was coloured brown on the map as not fit for ordinary crofter occupation. He believed that, as far as it was possible, every square mile of land had been visited by the Commission; and he did not agree that any had been overlooked. The land which was not included in the scheduling was omitted because the Commission did not think it proper for inclusion. For praise or blame he associated himself entirely with his colleagues on the Commission. They had agreed to report unanimously, and they must all take their share of the responsibility. They had been at great pains to produce results founded on common-sense, on the interests of the crofters, and on what would prove to be in the long run the interests of the proprietors as well. He was perfectly certain that the Bill would not set at rest the unfortunate differences existing between landlord and tenant in the Highlands, and he wished, for many reasons, that it had been a Bill of larger scope, difficult as such a Bill would be.

Mr. MARK NAPIER (Roxburgh) said, that he did not wish to sound any discordant note in the general harmony of praise and thanksgiving with which this Bill had been received, but he wished to refer to one or two objections which fell from the Leader of the Opposition, to whose speech he had listened with great interest, because, on the whole, it did not seem to betray hostility to the principles of the measure. The right hon. Gentleman's complaint rather seemed to be that the Bill would not bring within its scope the poorer class of cotters and crofters. But it was perfectly open to the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends to introduce Amendments in the direction which he had suggested; and he was very certain that the right hon. Gentleman would meet with hearty support from almost all the representatives of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman cited the case of a man who had no capital and who would not be able to stock his land. That was not a substantial difficulty at all. In his own county there were many men who had come into possession of small pieces of land, and who had found the want of capital no bar to their enterprise. He did not suppose that any of the crofters who now cultivated the land and got something out of it had received any assistance from any source but their own energy and self-denial. There was one man who came to the county which he represented, from Ireland, possessing all the qualities which were so much admired in Irishmen—a large family and a small purse. The family was almost the whole store of the man's wealth; he was without a friend, and he was a Roman Catholic and opposed in religion to the prejudices of those among whom he settled. But he got hold of five acres of waste land, and setting to work on it with his sons, in a short time he had converted the waste land into pasture and arable. He had now calves and sheep and a pretty farm. An hon. Gentleman had complained that the explorations of the Lord Advocate had not been extensive enough in the north; and he would press the Lord Advocate to continue them in the south. He was grieved that hon. Gentlemen from Highland districts should assume that their constituents alone were entitled to the benefits of the Bill. Why should not crofters in the south, the south-west, and the south-east be included, as well as the Highland crofters? He knew of many parishes in the south where people conducted their crofting operations exactly as they were conducted in the Highlands; and he hoped that if proof were given of such cases the Government would consent to include them in the Bill. There was a village in his county, established 80 or 100 years ago, in which the people were granted leases of the land on which their houses stood, and were induced by the promise of small rent to build strong and substantial houses. But these were absolutely valueless to them without the land, and the land was not granted on the same tenure, but only by verbal lease, and from year to year. The people were thus at the mercy of the landlords' agents, and if they did not obey his mandate they found that the land, by which alone they were able to live, was taken from them, without any compensation for improvements. He wished to add his cordial thanks to those which had been already offered to the Secretary for Scotland, for the manner in which the Bill had been introduced, and he sincerely hoped that the Bill would be passed, including within its scope all crofters in Scotland.

Leave being given, the Bill was brought up by Sir George Trevelyan and read 1°; to be read 2° upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill No. 214.]

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND). BILL.

In asking leave to bring in a

"Bill to make further provision for local government in counties in Scotland and for other purposes,"

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN said, the sixth year of county government in Scotland is now drawing to a close, and it is a tribute to the soundness of the system that those who are engaged in working it take the greatest interest in amending it. It is also a great proof of the practical character of Scotchmen that they are agreed as to the sort of amendments which ought to be introduced. Last year the Government proposed, as a separate part of the Parish Councils Bill, a number of amending county clauses. But the work on that Bill was so heavy that the county clauses had to be deferred. They can now approach the undertaking, however, with several distinct advantages. We have the experience of two three-year periods of County Councils for the modelling of our proposals, and that experience is embodied largely in the Report of the Scotch County Council Conference, to the general tenour of whose deliberations I attach the greatest value. The Government also have the advantage of being able to consider the views of the Scotch Members of Parliament, as incidentally expressed in the course of the Committee last year. The Government have not only the County Council Act of 1889 to go upon, but the Parish Councils Act of 1894, so that they are in a position to amend the former Act with the whole map of Scotch rural administration before them. In the Bill which I wish to introduce several old clauses are included without any great amendment. The power of the county councils to provide new county buildings; the power to borrow for services for which at present that power does not exist, and to spread the loan over a period not exceeding 40 years; a simple and inexpensive procedure for the acquisition of land by county councils for public purposes; the readjustment of county boundaries for purposes of valuation and for the distribution of the Government grants, carefully guarding any interference with political Parliamentary arrangements; powers to construct bridle paths and footbridges, and to repair certain damage to roads of the nature which is so frequent in the Highland counties; the giving to the county councils the powers and duties of road trustees and justices over ferries, and powers from the Burgh Police Act extended to the county councils over vagrants: these were the old clauses. By the eight new clauses we alter the levying of the public health rate, and propose that it shall be imposed on lands and heritages within the area to be assessed according to the annual value, as appearing in the valuation roll, in the same manner as the consolidated rates. That is the form for which there was a very strong demand at the county convention, and it was essentially the proposal of the late Government in their Bill of 1889. That is one new clause. A strong necessity has been felt for giving what are popularly known as dean-of-guild powers to the county authority. That feeling we have met in a manner which I commend to hon. Members. Speaking broadly, at present the rural authority can proceed against old buildings as a nuisance, but they have no power over new buildings. That power it is proposed to give them. It is proposed to give to the county council the power to make by-laws with regard to the sanitary arrangements of new buildings. The execution will be committed to the district committee, which is the health authority on the spot and in practical exercise of health administration. They will have the power to insist that works in conformity with the by-laws shall be carried out, or that the owner shall pull down or remove buildings, or they may do the work themselves. Already the county authorities in England have these powers, and this is one of the cases in which Scotland is decidedly behind England. The Government propose to give dean-of-guild powers without a Dean of Guild. The counties have medical officers and sanitary inspectors, and by the provisions of the Bill the services of these officers are placed at the absolute disposal of the local authorities for these purposes. But the clause may be applied either to the whole or to a specific part of the county, and this is absolutely necessary in dealing with the Highlands, where many of the houses are built by the people themselves and are lamentably deficient in much that ought to constitute human habitations. We cannot possibly call upon the poor crofters, and the still poorer cotters, at once to place themselves either on the recognised level of the demands of modern health requirements or to make themselves practically houseless. Therefore, the provision will be elastic, but it will be strong. Medical officers have done good service by their reports to the county councils, but there is great difficulty in getting statistics with regard to births and deaths and the cause of deaths, and that information is the very A B C of a real statistical system. They have hitherto got that information by a voluntary arrangement, but the Government now propose to give the medical authorities of the counties a legal title to obtain it. I now come to the question of protection against fire. There is considerable need in the counties for a better means of getting appliances for this purpose. The Scottish Office have been urged by several counties to allow money to be expended on this purpose out of the Equivalent Grant, on the ground that it is a work of public utility; but it is extremely difficult to accede to the request, because, though a work of public utility, it is not a work of public utility for the whole county, and, therefore, money given for the utility of the whole county can hardly be used for this purpose. We propose that the counties shall be able to make arrangements with the burghs to contribute a certain sum to the support of the fire-extinguishing apparatus and staff, and to have the command of it under certain conditions. If that is not sufficient, we propose that in a special water district a certain number of ratepayers may apply to the county council to provide engines, buckets, and pipes, and appoint officers. They will be allowed to appoint a superintendent, who may be a chief officer of police or a constable; but we have left out the words which occur in the Burgh Regulations, "erecting suitable dwellings for firemen." If hon. Members think fit to re-insert those words, the Government will offer no objection. Engines may be used outside the district, but a reasonable sum may be recovered from individuals whose houses or property are on fire. Attention has been called to the difficulty of providing against the communication of disease by milkcans, owing to their being washed with affected water. In the county I know very well there were no less than 100 persons attacked with typhoid fever, and 20 died through the washing of the cans of a single dairy, which had a large *clientèle*, with affected water. The Government propose to give the very strongest power to prohibit, under very severe and rapidly recovered penalties, the sale of milk from any dairy where infectious disease exists. We go farther than the English Act of 1890. In that Act it is stated that the powers can only be put in force when infectious disease is caused by the consumption of milk. In this Bill we have added the words—"or is likely to arise from the consumption of milk." Under the Local Government Act, the county councillors are elected in the month of December. It is proposed that the election shall take place on the first Tuesday in April, and I believe that that is in accordance with the general feeling of Scottish Members. The first election, according to the Bill, will be held in April 1896, and till then the present members will hold their seats. There is one difficulty, and one only, which stands in the way. The parish councillors for rural districts will be elected in April along with the county councillors, and in burghs and police burghs in November along with municipal councillors; and, therefore, in parishes partly rural and partly burghal the elections for the two parts of the same council will be at an interval of five months. If the House resolve to change the election to April, it will have several alternatives. The election of parish councillors in burghs may be altered to April, and an election can be held altogether separate from the municipal elections. But on the grounds of expense and inconvenience that is not what we recommend to the House. Then, if parish councillors in burghs and police burghs be elected in November, and in counties in April, one of two courses must be adopted. Either the new burgh parish councillors may remain idle for five months while the old councillors continue to serve, or the new burghal councillors may take office on the day of their election along with the old councillors from the landward districts. That is what we propose. It will have this good feature about it—that it will give some little continuity of administration to the council. The smaller provisions I can name in four or five sentences. We propose to enable writers or solicitors who are chairmen of district committees and parish councils to be justices of the peace as in burghs. We propose to remove the condition of "material change of circumstance" so as to enable the Secretary for Scotland to alter the number of county councillors and the electoral divisions, on the representation of a town council or county council, whenever that council may think it necessary to make such a representation. We propose to enable the surplus of the pension fund of the police force to be invested in loans raised for county council purposes, and to enable county councils to borrow three-fourths of the amount of the prospective rates instead of one half, so as always to have money in hand. I know it has been suggested that the local authorities should be allowed to raise a greater sum by taxation in a given year than was wanted, in order that they might have money in hand; but we think the most secure plan was to allow them to borrow three-quarters instead of one-half of the prospective rates. We also propose to allow the local authorities to use the best and most modern appliances for breaking stones for the roads. These are the proposals new and old, of the Government, and I hope, when they have been reviewed and supplemented by the experienced criticism of hon. Members for Scotland, the system of County Government for Scotland will be as complete in its plan, and as smooth in its working, as its best friends could desire.

*SIR CHARLES PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, the House was indebted to the right hon Gentleman for his statement of the provisions of the Bill. The details of the measure were, however, cf such a character that one could not be expected, until they were printed, to express assent or dissent in regard to them, but his own feeling, taking the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as a whole, was one of agreement, to a very large extent, with his proposals. One thing was suggested very forcibly to his mind, as, no doubt, it was present in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman in the consideration of the measure, viz., that it was desirable to attack, at long last, the general question of the public health of Scotland. They went at the question, year after year, by piecemeal, and there were several provisions of this Bill which would more naturally find places in a Public Health Measure. He did not quite gather from the right hon. Gentleman's statement, and it would be interesting for the House to know exactly—whether the modification of the law in regard to the notification of diseases was to be confined to county areas, or whether it was to be common to the whole of Scotland. In reference to the changes in the public health rate, there was a considerable body of opinion in favour of reverting to the identical proposal made by the late Conservative Government in 1889, or to something like it. There was no doubt that the perplexity to which the maintenance of the old rule of rating as to public health had led, had created a desire for simplification. It was the case that, in the matter of public health rates, the subjects that would be rated would naturally fall into different categories, because it was quite obvious that certain classes of subjects derived little or no benefit from the public health rate, as compared with others. But he understood the Government did not propose to differentiate the rate, but to make it one rate, and he thought there was a great deal to be said for the decision. It was the simplest arrangement, and would probably lead to the most easy administration; but it should be considered whether it would not need some modification in the direction to which he had pointed. The alternative which the Government had selected with reference to the change in the date of the elections seemed to him to introduce a totally new system into the constitution of representative bodies. Hitherto, the general desire was, that the new bodies should be constituted as nearly as possible at the one time. But the change of dates involved a gap which the Government recognised could not be bridged over; and, as he understood the proposal, the Councils would now be constituted partly of the old members and partly of the new. However, with the exception of these few details, he found himself in the main in very hearty agreement with what the right hon. Gentleman had said, and he was sure there would be a general concurrence of opinion amongst hon. Members that the Bill, though a modest, was yet a useful measure.

*MR. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) was glad, as one who knew the feelings of those who were interested in the present system of County Government in Scotland, that many of the provisions they had asked for in 1894 were included in the Bill, to its distinct improvement. In the enumeration of the old clauses which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to include in the Bill, he omitted the clause in reference to County Sanitary Authorities and Police burghs. He hoped, however, that was a mere inadvertence; and that they would have clearly laid down within the four corners of the Bill, what the precise relations were to be between the county Medical and Sanitary Officers and the burghs. If the right hon. Gentleman proposed to place those County Medical Officers in more responsible relations with the small burghs which might be created from time to time, he could view it with pleasure, because he thought it would contribute to improvement in public health in those areas. He thought the clause which dealt with the assessment under the Public Health Scotland Act would give rise to considerable discussion. Everyone who knew anything about Local Government in Scotland, parochial or county, would welcome a change in the present system of rating. The system under which county authorities had to levy the whole of the county rate on one basis, and then adopt a parochial basis which might be changed from year to year in regard to the assessment of the public health rate was most unfortunate, and, in his opinion, exceedingly expensive in its operation, for it gave an enormous amount of work to County Officers and Clerks. But the right hon. Gentleman's difficulties would begin when he tried to remedy that admitted difficulty. At the conference to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded there was a considerable difference of opinion in regard to the matter. Two views were submitted to the consideration of the conference: One suggested that the public health rates should in future be levied by the County authorities, not upon the basis of the system of deduction and classification limited to the particular parish, but upon a special system which would go beyond the parish, and which would empower the County Council—the authority that levied the county rate—to collect the rate upon a special system, with deductions and classifications which the County Council could fix in respect of the districts in which they levied the rates. That plan would simplify the existing system, and it would give a certain continuity to a recognised system in regard to the public health rate, which had increased more than any rate, and which would still further increase as demands for better sanitary arrangements in the dwellings of all classes of the public in Scotland were raised. As an alternative to that proposal there was the proposal in the Bill, which was that the County Council should in future assess for the public health rate on the gross valuation of the county. It must be perfectly obvious that, having regard to the special benefit which public health rates conferred on the more populous areas, there would be serious objection raised to the proposed change, unless they discriminated between agricultural holdings and other holdings, and therefore, in his opinion it would be better to adopt the first proposal. He was afraid this would be found to be a bone of contention when they came to discuss it. Whilst he should welcome the change, whatever was the ultimate way adopted in regard to it, he was in favour of the earlier alternative to which he had referred, and which, he believed, would be the fairer system to adopt in arriving at a determination of this question. With regard to the matter of the Dean of Guild jurisdiction, he was not quite sure, from the right hon. Gentleman's statement, whether it was to be in the power of the County Dean of Guild authority to deal with the character of the buildings erected and the particular sites selected for the purpose of erections. If that should be the case he thought it was to be deprecated. The county health authority, before any building was erected, should have the power to deal with the question of its sanitary arrangements and so forth. If in the case of buildings in counties where, as a rule, there was plenty of air, it was proposed to give the more drastic powers which were necessary in the case of town buildings it would be a mistake, and would lead to a considerable amount of contention. One other point to which he desired to refer was that which related to the question of "fire." That was one of the weak spots in their system of county administration. The burgh authorities had almost invariably shown themselves ready to assist in the extinction of fires when called upon by the county authorities. But there were parts of counties which were so remote from any burghs to which an appeal in such a case could be made, that it was high time that they had in the counties some such powers as the right hon. Gentleman proposed to give them in one clause of this Bill. He understood, however, that while the right hon. Gentleman proposed to give general powers of payment by the county authorities to the burghal authorities where the latter rendered assistance, that the proposed new provision would be limited to special water areas. He presumed the right hon. Gentleman meant that the rate which had been levied for the purpose of establishing these fire engines or escapes within that water area would be limited to the area within which the water rate was collected. If that was the case it would be only proper and right, in order to render these particular appliances available over adjacent parts of counties, that payments should be made by other portions of the district in respect of the use of the appliances. He hoped that that was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman, because it was exceedingly desirable not to cramp the power of the committees in the use of these appliances. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the proposal he had made to alter the date of the County Council election from December to April. He believed the general feeling of those in touch with local government in counties in Scotland would be found to be very largely in favour of the election taking place in April instead of December. No doubt difficulty would occur in regard to the appointment of members from parishes which were partly burghal and partly landward, but on the whole he did not imagine that such difficulty would be of a serious character. After all, the number of parishes of that kind was limited, and the work which the members who would have to represent the Parish Councils in the future had to discharge on these committees was not of that character that any great obstacle would be found in adopting the solution of the question which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested to the House. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman, not only upon what he had put in the Bill, but also upon some omissions from the Bill. He was exceedingly glad to see it was to be made an even more non-contentious measure than he could have ventured to hope. He was glad of this, because he was of opinion that on account of these omissions the Bill was more likely to pass quickly through this House. He believed that the Bill, containing the provisions which the right hon. Gentleman proposed, would conduce to good local government in the counties in Scotland, and he looked forward to its passage through the House with interest.

Dr. MACGREGOR desired to know if the right hon. Gentleman proposed under the Bill to give security of tenure to medical officers of health, and also power of appeal to a central board before they were dismissed for, perhaps, too faithfully doing their duty? If not it would be a weak point in the administration of the sanitary law, for it would not be reasonable to expect that medical officers could do their duty if they were liable to be dismissed by defaulters.

Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: There is no clause to that effect in the Bill at present.

Dr. MACGREGOR: Then I give notice that I will move it as an Amendment in Committee.

*Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY observed that, as regarded what the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken had said about the medical officers of health, he supported him in the action he took on this question last year, and he should be prepared to do so again. As regarded the Dean of Guild jurisdiction which the right hon. Gentleman had intimated that this Bill was to introduce for the first time into the counties, so far as it was devoted to sanitary improvements he was quite in favour of the proposal. But he would say at once he hoped it was not going any further. He hoped, in other words, it was not proposed to assimilate their life in the county to life in the towns in the matter of putting up buildings. The law of the Dean of Guild as applied in towns was very much law based on private Acts, and which would not be applicable in many respects to counties. He thought, for instance, it would be perfectly absurd if a person could not put up a new hay shed, or add a bath to his house, or put in a new window without having first to go to the county Dean of Guild to got leave as was the case in towns. He did not know whether there was anything of the sort in the Bill, but if there was he should certainly feel it his duty to oppose it. With this criticism he desired to associate himself with what had been said by other Members who had addressed the House.

Mr. H. T. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews Burghs) invited the right hon. Gentleman to make a little clearer the proposals he had foreshadowed as to giving powers to local authorities with regard to the employment of mechanical appliances in quarries and other such places. He took special interest in this point, which had been brought under the right hon. Gentleman's notice by a memorial from the County Council of Fife, and he desired to thank the right hon. Gentleman for acceding to the wish of that County Council by giving the Amendment in the law which was introduced in the Bill. There was one other point as to which he did not quite catch the nature of the proposals. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the powers which the Bill proposed to give to the County Council or the Finance Committee of the County Council to invest the surplus of the Police Pension Fund to carry out extensions &c., with regard to roads. He should like the right hon. Gentleman to make this matter a little clearer. He agreed that it would be a great improvement to hold the County Council elections in April instead of in December, but he foresaw considerable difficulty in the scheme the right hon. Gentleman had suggested inasmuch as part of a Parish Council would be elected and take office in November, while the remaining members would only come into office under the election which was held upon the first Tuesday in April. When they saw the Bill in print they would be better able to judge of particular provisions, and with these criticisms he should welcome the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, whilst he was sure that those associated with him would assist in passing the Bill quickly through this House.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Mid-Lanark) did not agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite that the effect of the omissions from the Bill would be to enable it to pass more quickly, but believed the reverse would be the case. There was one omission with regard to which they should, perhaps, be able to do in Committee what they did before with regard to a similar omission, and that was to induce that House to supply the omission which the Government had neglected to supply, and leave it to the House of Lords to throw it out if they thought fit. He referred to the power to Parish and County Councils to acquire land for the purpose of erecting dwelling houses. That clause was carried through the House of Commons and was rejected by the House of Lords, and the Government said that whilst for the sake of the Bill they would agree to the Lords' Amendment on that occasion, they would at the first opportunity introduce the clause again. Now something was due on the part of the Government to its supporters in this matter. The Scotch people looked with great interest upon this proposal, and the supporters of the Government did not wish to have it thrown in their teeth that the Government had not carried out their pledge.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN, in reply, said the Government had a Bill prepared which entirely carried out the promise which they made last year, but he did not believe that the Bill could properly be engrafted on the one now before the House. He remembered very well the Debate and Division which took place on the question of medical officers and of the support which his hon. Friend got, and he had no doubt that, the matter being germane to this Bill, would be reconsidered when the Bill got into Committee. With regard to the powers given to the local authority to use steam in quarries, he believed the Bill fulfilled the wishes of the influential County Council which had been most active in demanding these powers. The words of the Bill were :—

> "In any land wherein the County Council as the road authority or other persons authorised by them, have power under the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878, to search for, dig, and carry away materials, they are hereby empowered to use steam engines or electrical or other mechanical appliances for boring and blasting rock, or for breaking rock or rock-metal."

The rest of the clause contained provisions to guard against the abuse of those powers. They appeared to be an absolute *sine qua non.* In regard to the Police Pension Fund, Clause 19 provided—

> "Sub-section three of section eighteen of the Police (Scotland) Act, 1890, shall be amended to the extent and effect that the surplus of the annual income of the pension fund of a police force may be invested by the police authority as a loan to any County Council for any purpose for which such County Council is entitled to borrow money"

With regard to the days set apart for the different elections the Government quite acknowledged that difficulties existed. Whether the very bad councils after being elected should remain without functions for five months and should have those functions prolonged for five months at the next election was a small matter to which the Government would gladly accede. The Government thought their own proposal preferable, but whatever the result it was a small price to pay for a strong public desire.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Lanark, Govan) called attention to the omission from the Bill of any extension to police burghs or burghs other than royal burghs of the power of licensing. That was a grievance which was much felt in the burgh he represented. That in a large constituency of upwards of 60,000 people the governing body, the magistrates, should not have the power of either granting a licence or preventing one being granted, while they were responsible for peace and order in the burgh, and that in a royal burgh like Renfrew, having only 5,000 of a poplation, the magistrates should have such power, was a most anomalous state of affairs. He hoped his right hon. Friend would concede this power under the present Bill to the larger burghs.

Leave was given to bring in the Bill, which was presented accordingly, and read 1°; to be read 2° upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill No. 215.]

## FATAL ACCIDENTS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On the Order for the Adjournd Debate on Second Reading,

*MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, that when the Bill was last before the House he was in course of pointing out that the Lord Advocate had made out very little case for the measure. Since the introduction of the Bill two years ago there had been first the passing into law of the Notice of Accidents Bill of 1894; and in the present Session, there was a provision in the Factory and Workshops Bill for the holding of public inquiries whenever they were deemed necessary. With regard to fatal accidents arising from machinery, he asserted unhesitatingly that a jury was a bad tribunal to investigate a matter of the sort. A jury being full of sympathy, all you had to suggest was that if there had been some minute difference in the machinery the accident would not have happened, and then the jury at once rushed to the idea that that ought to have been done. What was wanted in order to avoid any suspicion of prejudice or favour on one side or the other was an opinion of experts, and this it would be perfectly easy to provide in the Bill. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to face this fact, that every one of the learned bodies which had had this Bill before them, such as the Association of Procurators Fiscal of Scotland was against the provision as to a jury, and had condemned it. He looked upon the proposal contained in the Bill as an attempt to introduce the coroner's system of inquiry into Scotland, and thought that in embodying it in the Bill the right hon. Gentleman had yielded to the pressure that had been brought to bear upon him by the trade unions. He should have no objection to his right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate being placed in the position of having to decide whether an inquiry should or should not be held. He did not intend to oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, but when the measure got into Committee he intended to move such amendments as would give effect to the rooted objections to the methods of investigation which the Bill proposed should be adopted. The effect of the Bill as it stood would be to enable speculative agents to attempt to ascertain by means of the preliminary inquiry whether they had any chance of obtaining a verdict.

*MR. RENSHAW thought that a Bill providing for a public inquiry into the causes of fatal accidents was one to which no great exception could be taken if it proposed to institute an inquiry into all cases of fatal accidents. But he objected to the limited application of this measure. He thought that the Bill submitted by the present Government in 1893 was a better Bill than this, and he believed he was correct when he reminded the Lord Advocate that a deputation waited upon him after that Bill had passed through the Grand Committee, and urged upon him the desirability of introducing a jury clause into the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out to that deputation the difficulties involved in such a proposal, and shewed that it would involve the appointment of a large number of sheriffs, and the summoning of something like 4,000 special jurors in one county alone. If those were good reasons for not inserting a jury clause in 1893, surely they were good reasons in 1895. He did not take objection to the Bill in any spirit of antagonism, but he thought that the House ought to be enlightened with regard to the definition of "industrial employment or occupation." He did not know whether it was intended that it should include domestic servants. He presumed that it was, and if that was the case it only led him to entertain a stronger objection to the Bill. There was a large variety of industrial employments, and in the case of many of them inquiries had already been instituted; but if it was proposed to include other occupations than those hitherto dealt with, it seemed to him as though that would put the question on a broader basis, yet the basis would still be so limited that it would be unreasonable to extend the provisions of the existing Act, unless the logical and true course were adopted of extending the system of inquiry into fatal accidents to all classes of the Scottish population. There were one or two points he would like to bring to the notice of the Lord Advocate, which showed the absurd manner in which this Bill would work. He would suppose the case of a master slater who employed one or two men. He might go out with one of his journeymen to work upon a roof. Not infrequently a rope was held by one man on one side of the roof while the other man descended on the other side to do the work. If the rope was held by the journeyman and the master slater fell to the ground, there would be no public inquiry, although the accident might have been due to some fault of the man. On the other hand, if the master held the rope, and the journeyman fell to the ground, there would be an inquiry under this Bill. He would suppose another case: a market gardener, working with a man employed by him. The man held a ladder while the employer ascended it, and fell and lost his life. There would be no inquiry; but if the master held the ladder, and the accident happened to the man, then there would be an inquiry. Again, a coachman went out in a dogcart with his master, and an accident happened while the coachman was driving, the master being thrown out and breaking his neck. There would be no inquiry. On the other hand, if the coachman met with a fatal accident while the master was driving, an inquiry would be held. Suppose, again, a fire broke out in a mansion house, and caused the death of one or two of the children of the owner. It might have originated through the carelessness of one of the servants, but no inquiry would take place. If, on the other hand, in consequence of the negligence or carelessness of a servant, a fire led to the death of a fellow servant, there would be an inquiry at once. This Bill seemed to him to suggest that there was a difference in the value of life among the different classes in Scotland; and he could not conceive why, if the Government were going to have an inquiry in one case, there should not be an inquiry in all cases where fatal accidents resulted from carelessness. What were the provisions with regard to factories, and mines, and other employments which already existed? In the case of mines, there was a provision with regard to inquiries; in the case of fatal accidents in factories, there was already legislation in the Act of 1891, which dealt very fully with that. There was a clause in the Factories and Workshops Bill, now submitted for the consideration of the House, rendering still more effective the provisions of the Act of 1891, with regard to inquiry in the case of fatal accidents under the Factories and Workshops Act. The Act of 1891 made a tolerably full provision in regard to this matter. In the 33rd Section, Sub-Section 5 of that Act, it was provided that, where a death occurred by accident in any factory or workshop, a public inquiry in open Court should be held by the Sheriff on the petition of any person interested. Surely that was an ample and sufficient provision? But it was to be extended in the present Bill, and it was proposed that, where it appeared by the 18th Section of the Factories and Workshops Act to the Secretary of State that a formal investigation of any accident was necessary, he might direct such an investigation to be held, and with respect to it Sections 45 and 46 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act should have effect. In those sections it was provided that the Secretary of State might direct an investigation to be held by a competent person in an open Court, which was to enjoy the same powers as a Court of Summary Jurisdiction; that a report was to be made, and the Secretary of State might make that report public. As an employer of labour he could not conceive why, with the existing provisions of the law in respect of any fatal accidents occurring either in mines or factories, there was any need for additional legislation. The Notice of Accidents Act of last year, by which the Board of Trade might hold an open inquiry in the case of serious accidents in railway, gasworks, building trades, and other employments, seemed to him to fill the gap left in regard to such inquiries by the provisions of the Factories Act, and the Coal Mines Regulation Act. He could not help looking upon this Bill as class legislation. Why was it proposed to inquire into fatal accidents, when they occurred to persons in industrial employment or occupation, while they were not going to inquire inquire into the cases of men who were employers? Besides, it appeared that the Government were going to make everyone pay for the cost of this jury system, though they limited whatever benefits might arise to one particular class of the community. If there were a general feeling among Members who represented Scottish constituencies that a public inquiry in the case of all sudden deaths and fatal accidents, similar to the coroner system in England, was necessary, or a feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs—of which he had not become aware during his long residence in Scotland—then he should be willing to support the Bill, if it proposed to extend the benefits suggested to all classes of the community in Scotland. But it seemed to him that it was an illogical proposal to limit the application of the Bill to one class only while all classes were to be compelled to pay for putting the provisions of the Bill in operation. Human life was just as sacred in one class as it was in another; and, therefore, the provisions of the Bill, as far as they were good, ought to be extended to the whole population in Scotland, if it was intended to establish a jury system and to throw the expense on all classes of the community. He did not believe, however, that public opinion in Scotland was in favour of anything of the kind. As far as he was aware, the Lord Advocate had the power in any case in which it was thought desirable to set in motion machinery with regard to a public inquiry which the Bill suggested. He could not see the necessity for a Bill when the Lord Advocate could hold such an inquiry in open Court, where witnesses could appear and be examined—an inquiry, moreover, which thoroughly satisfied the public. The powers of the Lord Advocate was not limited to persons engaged in industrial employment or occupation; and it was because he looked upon this Bill as unnecessary and useless, and because it reflected, in a very unfair and uncalled-for manner, on those who were the employers of labour in Scotland, that he objected to it.

MR. HARRY SMITH (Falkirk, Burghs) pointed out that the second clause of the Bill had been misinterpreted by the hon. Member. It was not the intention of the Government to limit the inquiries to the servants who happened to be employed in industrial occupations; on the contrary, all occupations and all classes were embraced within its scope. If the hon. Member should have the misfortune to be killed in an accident, he might rest assured that, if the Bill passed in its present form, his representatives would have the consolation of a public inquiry. As to the costly nature of the proposed inquiry, the hon. Member said that in a year 4,000 jurors would be summoned for Lanarkshire alone. But as the county of Lanark embraced the second city of the Empire, which really meant more than half of Scotland, it seemed to him that the Legislature need not hesitate to expend £5,000 for the purposes of this inquiry. He, indeed, congratulated the Government on having brought in this Bill, which, he believed. would meet a very great public want in Scotland. He thought, also, that the hon. Member had misinterpreted the feelings of the working classes in West Renfrew, when he alleged that there was no public feeling in favour of an inquiry of this kind. He knew Renfrewshire as well as the hon. Member did, and he asserted that there was a feeling existing there in favour of an inquiry—not absolutely confined to the discretion of a Government official, however highly placed. What the workmen wished was that there should be a compulsory inquiry in any case of accident. He represented a constituency in which the use of very large machinery was common, a constituency in which there were a great many miners. There were many accidents in his district, and he had received many communications from his constituents on this matter, and they were one and all in favour of the Bill of the Government, and all in favour of an inquiry by jury. Looking at it from the point of view of those who had to conduct these inquiries, the resident sheriffs, he thought they would feel it to be much better to have the aid of a jury in cases of extreme importance.

*Sir CHARLES PEARSON said, the Bill was one which deserved serious consideration. He said so because, in the first place, it seemed to be a departure at once from the established practice in Scotland, and from the course of recent legislation in this matter. He had not heard any one allege that there was a defect in the system which exists which the present proposal would correct. He did not know whether hon. Members who had spoken had realised the effect that this Bill would have on the ordinary working of criminal inquiry in Scotland. The Bill would affect the Lord Advocate and the Crown Office as regarded all cases where this Bill applied. At all events, they would not go on in the normal manner, and it seemed to him that this would be a most serious infraction of the practice in Scotland. He should like to know if this was a correct reading of the Bill. In the second place the Bill, as it was framed, seemed to be a serious departure from the proposals in recent years on this subject, the tendency of which had been to vest one or other of the great Departments of State with a discretion to order a public inquiry in cases of industrial accidents. This Bill proposed to limit inquiries to cases of death. Why was it to be applied to cases only where death occurred? Suppose there was an accident where 100 or more were injured, and they all recovered? This Bill would not apply in this or any similar case, but if a single life was lost—though there is no fault alleged against anyone, though it was a case of the sheerest accident—then there must be an inquiry. He contrasted this with the system in existence, and contended that the Bill would exclude inquiry into a large number of cases where inquiry might be far more fruitful in discovering liability and disclosing fault. Not that he was in favour of extending this Bill to all such cases, but that he thought it right to point out this inconsistency. The Bill was absolutely compulsory, and they were told that the workmen would be satisfied with nothing less. Why? Why should they be put to the expense of a public inquiry instead of leaving it as hitherto to the discretion of the Department? He thought that all legitimate claims would be satisfied by leaving the matter to the discretion of the Lord Advocate for the time being. What was the tribunal that was to be set up? There seemed to be an idea that sheriff-court jury trials were quite familiar in Scotland in civil cases, but that was not so. Except in the rare cases of jury compensation trials under the Lands Clauses Act, he was not aware that such a thing was heard of, yet this Bill assumed the contrary, and pointed to a state of matters which did not exist. He should like to hear some justification of this. The Bill introduced two years ago made no provision for a jury at all, and the proposal, when made in Committee, was torn to pieces by the Lord Advocate himself, and was not pressed to a division. He wanted some substantial reason for this change of front. There were two other points which he desired to touch upon. They heard almost every day in Scotland of bitter complaint by jurors of the waste of time and loss of business which they had to undergo in these inquiries. This Bill would put a very considerable burden upon the jurors in Scotland. Then, what about the cost of carrying out the provisions of the measure? Had the Government really thought out that most essential particular? So far as he knew, not a single penny was provided for by the Bill, except merely the remuneration of the jurors. Was his right hon. Friend serious in proposing that the jurors should be remunerated at the cost of the locality where the death occurred? Where were the Members for Edinburgh and Glasgow? In those large towns there were large infirmaries, to which accidents from all parts were brought, and the jurors in those cities were to be called upon to deal with the deaths occurring there, and the ratepayers of those cities were to pay for it. The fact was that the Government had thought out this subject in a wholly inadequate way. Then, were there to be no costs except the costs of paying the jurors? These cases were sure to be very keenly contested; every one of them would be a rehearsal for the civil action which was to follow. The Bill provided that the witnesses were to be paid; but who was to pay them? There was no provision. Were these witnesses really to be paid for by the ratepayers of the place where the death happened to occur? Again, the sheriff and sheriff clerk could not get to the place where the inquiry was to be held for nothing. In the absence of the sheriff, the Secretary for Scotland was to appoint a person to hold the inquiry; was he to do it for nothing? If not, who was to pay? In one case there was to be a skilled inspection. That involved, he assumed, a skilled inspector; but not a word was said in the Bill as to remuneration. There were to be shorthand notes of the inquiry. Shorthand-writers would not, as a rule, work for nothing; who was to pay them? Again, copies of the proceedings were to be furnished; but not a word was said as to who was to pay the costs of furnishing them. All these details bore on the working out of this Bill as a practical measure, and he thought that the House was entitled to know whether the expenses were to be put upon the rates or upon the Exchequer; and, if upon the rates, whether they were to fall upon those unfortunate towns which were public-spirited enough to provide infirmaries for districts far beyond their own limits. These matters, taken together, constituted a severe criticism on the Bill as it now stood though he still thought it capable of being made a useful measure. He trusted that his right hon. Friend would show himself as open-minded, if the Bill got into Committee, as he did on a previous occasion. If he did so, then the anomalies pointed out might be got over.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) expressed gratification that the Representatives of the front Opposition Bench had not anything to offer in opposition to the Second Reading of this Bill. They had not got a coroner's inquest in Scotland, and the only investigation was by the Crown Authorities privately, to ascertain whether there ought to be criminal prosecution. He had a good deal of sympathy with the objections—perhaps he might call them prejudices — which were so strongly entertained on the opposite side against any innovation by the introduction of any new kind of public inquiry, but he believed that Members of the House would, to use a common expression, be living up in a balloon if they were not aware that when they had the community of interests and opportunity of intercourse between workmen in all parts of the country, it would be impossible to maintain the position that if a man in England lost his father or his son in an accident he was to have a public inquiry, but, that in Scotland, such a man was to be content with a private inquiry, to which he was not to have access, and where the true causes of the fatal accident were not to be brought to light. That was a state of things which, if possible to defend, it would be impossible to maintain. He thought it required a very prejudiced ingenuity to discover a motive of the kind suggested from the Opposition side. The suggestion took him entirely by surprise, and he thought it was very easily answered, because, if it were the case that the examination at these proceedings and the public inquiry were to be the basis of action of speculative change, surely it might, and he thought it would, result in a great many improper civil actions being stopped. Therefore, if there were much importance in that consideration at all, it would tell quite as much on one side as on the other. The essence of this demand was that the inquiry should be a public inquiry, and it was perfectly natural that a person who had suffered the loss of a near relative should desire that the accident should be inquired into, not by an expert, as had been suggested, but by a body of common-sense men, or, in other words, by a jury. That was the natural want and the natural demand of the people of Scotland, and it was only just and humane to those who were the sufferers by such accidents that it should be granted. The jury system in England was a perfectly natural one, and it had worked well, and it was only reasonable that the people of Scotland, if they desired it, should have a similar system in relation to the class of cases in question. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities spent much time in showing that no provision was made for the expenses of those inquiries, and that the incidence of the expense would be fixed on the place where the death occurred, and not on the place where the accident happened. But the Government would be perfectly prepared to meet him on those points, which need not be debated on the Second Reading of the Bill. They could be easily adjusted in Committee. He admitted that to a Scotchman and a Scotch lawyer this question of a jury might seem a somewhat new one, except in the case of criminal trials, but he would remind the House that the demand had been a greatly increasing one until now it had become so strong that it could not be wisely resisted, and instead of blaming the Government for yielding to that demand, he would heartily commend them for doing so.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said he was glad there had been a certain amount of discussion on the Bill, for undoubtedly it excited a great deal of interest in Scotland, particularly among the industrial classes. Before he answered the chief questions which had been put to him by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would briefly explain what the present system of inquiry into violent and sudden deaths in Scotland was. There was no coroner's inquest, and no public inquiry, but there was a carefully conducted investigation by the Procurator-Fiscal in every case, and that official reported to the Crown Office, which was under the control of the Lord Advocate, and further inquiry was then made if there was any reason for suspicion or doubt—thus, in Scotland very sudden or violent death was inquired into. That system he believed to be satisfactory in the great majority of cases, and not only so, but it often saved private feeling in regard to matters the publication of which must be painful to relatives and families without being of any advantage to the public. Accordingly, the last Commission which inquired into this and other matters connected with the administration of justice in Scotland, reported about 1872, that there was no general desire in that country that the system should be altered by the introduction of coroners' inquests. But within the last 10 or 12 years a strong feeling has arisen among the industrial classes that it would be desirable that inquiries in regard to fatal accidents occurring in industrial pursuits, should be public. Among the reasons for this there was the very cogent one that if any fault or weakness was found in the system of conduct or management of any industry, the publication of the fact enabled it to be noted, and the recurrence of the evil prevented by regulation or change of method. There were many other reasons, but undoubtedly the desire for public inquiry strongly existed, and it increased with the growing complexity and danger of certain forms of industry. When the Government came into Office, the matter was pressed upon them, and they came to the conclusion that, under the circumstances, it was reasonable to provide for a public inquiry in cases of the class referred to. His right hon. Friend opposite had twitted him with first making a proposal to hold such inquiries without a jury. It was true that he did so, and the reason was that it was desirable to provide a public inquiry with a minimum of change, expense and alteration of machinery; and those who had had great experience in such matters would feel confidence in such an inquiry conducted by the Sheriff, with the assistance of the existing officials, although there would be no jury present. But it was undoubtedly the case that legal and official persons were not always the best to deal with industrial facts in cases of the class referred to. At all events, the Government did bring in that proposal involving a minimum of change, but shortly after it came from the Grand Committee, very strong and numerous representations were made from nearly all the industrial centres of Scotland that there was an almost unanimous feeling that it was desirable to have a jury in the conduct of such cases in future. These representations came from the persons who were most directly interested in the matter—the persons whose lives and limbs were at hazard, and who, therefore, had the right to know how it was a man came by his death if a fatal accident occurred. The Government were not ashamed to say, when a demand of that kind was made by persons well entitled to make it, that they considered that it ought to be granted, especially when the demand was a reasonable one in itself. There was another strong consideration—namely, that there was often found upon a jury some one who could contribute from practical experience information or knowledge affecting the inquiry, which professional and official persons could not give or did not possess. The Government would not have been doing their duty if they had not recognised the perfectly natural and legitimate feeling which existed in all the trades in Scotland in regard to a matter affecting deeply the lives and limbs of those concerned, and taken the judgment of Parliament upon it. A number of small objections had been raised which, perhaps, were rather for a Committee; but out of respect for those who had raised them he would deal with them. The hon. Member for Buteshire said that the jury was the worst tribunal to have in a matter of this kind, but he could not expect a general assent to that. The hon. Member seemed to think that there would be a temptation to the jury to sympathise with the servant against his employer, but this was not a question of money damages, or of litigation of any sort; it was an inquiry, it was an inquest, and the answer to the inquiry would be not what damages should be given to A as against B, but when and where the death or deaths to which the inquiry related took place, and the cause or causes of the death or deaths.

*MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, it might be the fault of A or B.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said, the criticism which had been made did not apply to an inquiry of this kind. It was complained that the inquiry was to be universal in the case of fatal accidents in industrial occupations; and it was proposed that instead discretion should be vested in the Lord Advocate. He thought, however, it would be better that it should be automatic; in the first place it would be known that the holding of an inquiry did not depend on the judgment of any official; and, secondly, in any inquiry relating to an accident time was of the essence of the matter. Before they could make a preliminary inquiry, report to the Lord Advocate, and obtain the issue of an Order, some days, perhaps longer, might have elapsed, and in the meantime valuable evidence might be lost, and possibly further danger incurred. It had also been argued that they were covering ground already to a large extent occupied by a number of separate Acts. It was true that under various Acts, such as the Mines, Boiler Explosions, Factories, and Merchant Shipping Acts, there were provisions for the institution of an inquiry at the discretion of a public Department. But experience had already proved that when an inquiry had been made by the Lord Advocate's Department, the other Department interested had been satisfied, and if this Bill became law the holding of an immediate public inquiry, where all parties were heard, would supersede all these optional inquiries. He was sure the President of the Board of Trade, or any other Minister, when considering whether an inquiry should be held, would first send for the papers relating to the inquiry which had been held on the spot, and if he found in them all that could be ascertained he would not open another inquiry. Consequently, there was no inconsistency, and they were not duplicating, but simplifying, these inquiries. It had been argued that the Bill was too large, and that it was too small; if any hon. Members wished to enlarge its scope they would be glad to consider their Amendments. He did not agree that the Bill was a class Bill; it affected industrial employments or occupations, and thus dealt with both master and servant.

MR. RENSHAW asked how domestic service would be classed?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE said, that that was an industrial employment. The matter of expenses had also been referred to, and it was true that they had provided that the expense of the jury should be paid in the same way as inquests in England were provided for, as that was an expense new to the law of Scotland. The other expenses would be official expenses, because they would be using a staff and a machinery which they had at present. He hoped the House would assent to the Second Reading of the Bill.

*MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) held, that the Bill would have passed long ago but for the opposition of the Tory Party. The hon. and learned Member for the Edinburgh University said the Bill might be made a capable Bill; if that were so why had he blocked it for the last two years.

*SIR C. PEARSON stated, that he had never blocked it.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, the hon. Member had prevented its going to a Committee.

*SIR C. PEARSON observed, that, on the contrary, it had gone to a Committee.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said the Bill of last year did not go to a Committee, and either the hon. Member or somebody who acted for him prevented its going through. It was practically his (Mr. Morton's) Bill. In 1893 he had moved to reduce the salaries of three of Her Majesty's Ministers in order to get this Bill introduced, and he was very glad the Government had given way. The hon. Member for the Edinburgh University said the Bill was a departure from present practice, but that might be urged against any and all reform. He also said that there was no defect in the present system. When he (Mr. A. C. Morton) induced the Government to bring in this Bill, however, he had proved up to the hilt that there was a defect in the practice in Midlothian. At present the Home Secretary only ordered an inquiry into accidents in mines in very special cases. The House was told there was no demand for this Bill. But long before he mentioned it in the House, the representatives of the working men of the United Kingdom, in their annual assemblies and at their Trades Councils, unanimously passed resolutions asking that the law on this subject might be altered. It had been said to be contrary to the practice of the Lord Advocate's office that the relatives of deceased men or anybody should see a copy of the Report of the Procurator Fiscal. So they were unable to find out whether anyone was to blame. What was wanted was, an immediate and open inquiry, so that before anything was removed or altered, they could find out if there was anyone at fault, or blame to be attached to anybody—employers or workmen. It had been said that extra expense would be involved if the Bill became law. But he submitted that it would save expense and trouble to everyone concerned; because, when an inquiry was open, and everyone knew what went on, the friends of the deceased would be able to see whether there was any ground for going to law. At present the only possible way of finding out whether the employers were wrong or not was to spend £400 or £500 in lawyers' expenses, He was told that the real opposition to the Bill came from the legal profession in Edinburgh. Why they should object to a reform of this kind he could not say, unless it was that some legal officers, who had not enough to do at present, might have to earn their salaries more than they had hitherto done. His hon. Friend opposite said: "Why not an inquiry into every accident?" He should like to see in Scotland the system of coroners' juries that prevailed in England. It was said that a great many people were not in favour of that. But perhaps it would come by-and-by. They must be content with what they could at present get. He would like to see inquiries into non-fatal accidents. We were not, however, far enough advanced for that. But by a special Act in the City of London there were inquiries by the coroner into fires whether accompanied by loss of life or not. The English system of coroners' inquests was for the benefit of the people, and a system something like it in Scotland would enable working people and others to find out how accidents occurred and who was to blame. He did not think there would be very much expense in connection with the working of the Act. The Bill had been blocked for several years, and he hoped that now those who had blocked it would give way to the general feeling of the industrial classes in Scotland, and allow them to have these inquiries, which would be as much to the interests of the masters as of the men.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, that as a Member of the Committee that dealt with this Bill two years ago, it was only just to say, in answer to the hon. Member for Peterborough, and in justice to the Scotch Members generally, that he alone could not be credited with sympathetic interest in the promotion of the Bill. Nearly all the Scotch Members, irrespective of politics, and who understood industrial questions, did everything to make this Bill a replica of the English coroner's jury system. In justice to the Scotch Members, this should be said by one who did not claim, like the hon. Member for Peterborough, to be Member for the Universe—Scotland included. The hon. Member for Renfrew asked why this Bill should be limited to *employés* and not extended to the employers and other sections of society. But Parliament was compelled to pass legislation affecting the industrial classes, because, by virtue of their employment, they laboured under disabilities that other sections of society did not. But if the hon. Member would guarantee that the employers in Scotland and elsewhere would have the good taste to be killed in as large numbers as the workmen, he would move that the Bill be extended to them. The change proposed by the Bill was justified; and, as showing the opinion of the working classes in Scotland, he would read the following Resolution, which was passed two years ago by their representatives:—

> "That we express our great dissatisfaction at the action ef the Government in refusing to provide in the Fatal Accidents Public Inquiry (Scotland) Bill that investigations should be made by the Sheriff, or other competent officer, and the jury."

The Government had, by the Bill, complied with the universal demand of the Scotch workmen. It was based on the principle of the coroners' jury system, but provided the advantage that there would be more competent officers to advise the jury than we had in England, and the Scotch jury was smaller than the English jury of 12. He cordially approved of the change proposed, and on behalf of the representatives of the working classes, and the trades unions in particular, who for the last 15 years had pressed this Bill on Liberal and Tory Governments, he sincerely trusted the Bill would be read a second time, and that the Scotch workmen would be living under its advantages that day 12 months.

Dr. MACGREGOR asked whether the Bill would cover deaths from violence occurring in the industrial departments of lunatic asylums; he thought the Bill should cover them.

*The LORD ADVOCATE said, that inquiry into cases of violent deaths in asylums was already provided for, and he did not know whether the persons to whom the hon. Member referred could be described as carrying on an industry, but he had no doubt that all that was required was already provided for by the Lunacy Acts.

Dr. MACGREGOR would put the case if one lunatic assaulted another when engaged in farming operations.

*The LORD ADVOCATE said, he was afraid that assault was not a known industry.

Bill read 2°.

## LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. J. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) rose to move for leave to introduce a Bill to facilitate the construction of light railways in Great Britain. He said that frequently in past Sessions, and also in this Session, the House had had its attention called to the absence of facilities which ought to exist for the conveyance of agricultural produce from the agricultural districts to the markets of the country. At this moment, in particular, when the agricultural industry, in which they all felt so deep an interest, was suffering from a depression so severe and so long-continued, it became their duty to take every step they could to remove any cause which might contribute to that depression, and to show the interest they felt in the prosperity of that industry by facilitating, as much as possible, the conveyance of agricultural produce from the places of production to the markets. Besides the interest they all felt in the prosperity of the agricultural community, there was also the interest they all had in seeing that the rural districts were no longer depopulated by the influx of their people into the towns, and also in seeing that the establishment of industries in small towns and in rural districts was facilitated, as far as possible, by cheaper conmunication. He did not say that the measure would go very far in relieving the depression in agriculture, which was due to causes operating over the whole world, and many of which were by Parliament quite irremovable. He made no such claim, and he produced the measure as nothing more than a palliative of some evils, and one which, in many agricultural districts, would give the farmer a better chance than he now enjoyed. He would shortly state what were the provisions of the Bill and what had induced the Government to adopt them. In the month of December last he asked a number of gentlemen representative of various agricultural bodies, of railways, of engineering, and of municipal corporations, to meet at the Board of Trade in order to discuss the propriety of introducing a measure of this kind. That conference was widely attended, and it appointed a Committee, which held a very large number of sittings, and ultimately produced a valuable report, which had been already laid on the table. He tendered his sincere thanks to the members of that Committee for the great pains they had bestowed upon the subject and for their valuable Report. The Committee was presided over by the hon. Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir B. Samuelson), and it included, besides eminent engineers and distinguished Members of the other House, the right hon. Member for West Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach), the right hon. Member for one of the divisions of Leeds (Mr. Jackson), and hon. Members for Northamptonshire, Wolverhampton, Somerset, Montgomeryshire, Sunderland, and Islington. It would be seen that public opinion in all parts of the House was well represented, and the Bill he was introducing was based upon the recommendations of that Committee. Those recommendations went mainly to two points—namely, the cheapening of the method by which railways were now authorised in dispensing with the heavy preliminary expenses which were incurred in passing a Bill through Parliament, and also the relaxing of those requirements which it had been the custom of the Board of Trade to impose, in some cases under the absolute direction of Parliament, and in other cases under a sense of duty which had become practically imperative as regarded both the construction and the working of railways. As to procedure, the Bill proposed to commit the authorisation of light railways to county councils, including in that designation county boroughs, and it was provided that county councils should receive proposals made to them by the promoters of light railways. If a county council considered that a *primâ facie* case was made out, then it was to appoint a Committee to inquire into the matter. The promoters were to make out their case, to state the area through which they would pass, and to show that they had consulted all the local authorities; thereupon the Committee was to prepare a draft order, and that was to be sent to the Board of Trade, which was to consider it with a view to three points in particular. The first was the magnitude of the undertaking, so as to secure that under these exceptional provisions no railway should be carried out which ought—in respect of its length or the importance it might have otherwise, for instance, as a connecting link between two great systems—to be subject to the judgment of Parliament. It will be the duty of the Department to see that the provisions of the Bill are not used to remove from Parliament any of the jurisdiction which it ought in the public interest to exercise. Secondly, the Board of Trade will consider the proposals from the point of view of the safety of the public, and will insist on all the provisions required therefor. Thirdly, the Board of Trade will be charged with the duty of protecting landowners; and any landowner who thinks that his land ought not to be taken compulsorily, will have *locus standi* before the Board of Trade, in asking that the order for the taking of his land shall be varied. These will be found adequate safeguards for the new procedure which the Bill proposes. As justifying the provisions of the measure, I will read from the report of the Committee—

> "The Committee think that it is not reasonable that undertakings of limited scope, when they are approved of by the locality they are intended to serve, should be forced, as they are now, to have recourse to the expensive tribunal of a Parliamentary Inquiry. The Committee are of opinion that the recent creation of popular local authorities of various degrees throughout Great Britain opens the door to an escape from the great cost attending applications to Parliament, by enabling powers and responsibilities with reference to the authorisation and control of light lines to be conferred on those bodies; and that the time has arrived for Parliament to consider whether this should not be done, an ultimate appellate jurisdiction being reserved to the Government Department charged with the inspection of railways, which, it may be assumed, would be exercised with due regard to the existence of such local control and responsibility. If this were done, the initial cost of construction, and the expenses of working, could be so greatly reduced that many light railways or tramways, promoted either by independent companies, or by the existing lines of railway and tramway, could be undertaken to the great advantage of districts, and especially agricultural districts, at present without satisfactory means of transport."

These words represent the unanimous judgment of the Committee, which was in every sense a representative body. Although several of the members of the Committee desired that its recommendations should go further, there was no difference of opinion and no minority Report on this particular point. In making these proposals the Government is, of course, asking Parliament to part with a certain measure of its power; but as far as experience of these local authorities has gone, there is every reason to believe that they are discharging their duties with circumspection and judgment. They act in the light of public opinion, and are responsible to their constituents; and it will be the duty of the Government Department, in charge of the matter, to see that they do not go beyond what is the proper scope and intention of this measure; and I submit that the time has come when, in a matter of this kind, Parliament might endeavour to effect the enormous saving which will unquestionably be the result of these provisions. As to the question of construction, everyone knows that the construction of our railways was excessively costly. No engineer will deny that our railways are, in respect of construction and service, the best in the whole world. But it would be quite impossible, if communication is to be readily extended, to continue to maintain the extremely high standard of convenience and safety thought necessary when the great trunk lines of the country were made. With respect to those trunk lines, I should not propose to reduce the elements of safety at present secured by the Board of Trade requirements, especially in connection with the swift passenger traffic. But these small lines will run at comparatively slow rates of speed, and in respect of them the severity of the requirements may be relaxed, and their construction may be permitted on a different standard. The Board of Trade may be a little more tolerant of level crossings, may dispense with the present elaborate station arrangements, and in many ways may materially diminish the whole cost of construction and working, if only the necessary authorisation from Parliament is given. It has been stated that the Board of Trade has been too severe. The Department has felt bound to consider the safety of the public as its first charge, until Parliament, as the organ of public opinion, authorises it to relax its requirements. But the evidence supplied has convinced the Board of Trade and the Committee that it is possible to dispense with a great many of those requirements in this case without any increased danger to the public or to the traffic. The same remark applies also to the working of the lines. It will be much cheaper if there is a less expensive permanent way, less station accommodation, and a smaller number of railway servants. Next, as to the probability that these lines will be made without the provision of some kind of public aid. It has been suggested that public aid should be given to these enterprises from the national Exchequer. I do think that the Government would be justified, in the present condition of the public revenue and of public opinion in regard to this question, in proposing a measure so novel and open to so many serious objections of policy. It has never been the policy of this country to subsidise railways, and Parliament would be making a serious new departure in taking such a step. The result of that policy in various foreign countries is well known. It has also been suggested that the making of these railways ought to be aided out of the local rates, and three members of the Committee signed a separate Report in which they made that suggestion. There is, no doubt, much to be said for this suggestion; and I do not suppose that the local authorities, seeing how strong an interest they have in avoiding any unnecessary expense, would be imprudent in using the power if it were conferred on them. But, at the same time, I must feel that very great objections would be taken in the House to the conferring of such a power. Expressions of opinion have reached me from many quarters which make me feel that if the Government proposed to give to the County Councils the power of subsidising these undertakings, some persons would fear that they would remain ultimately as a charge on the rates, and the measure would meet with a great deal of opposition, from which, I hope, it will escape. We are, to a certain extent, in a stage of experiment. It may turn out ultimately that the making of these lines will be so great and clear a public benefit that either the National Exchequer or local authorities may be authorised to give them some aid or assistance. All I can say now is that the case does not seem to justify the trial of that experiment at present. The House knows how great has been the expense at which the railway system of this country has been created. I have heard the total expense of our railways in Great Britain estimated at something like £50,000 a mile, counting all that has been spent on Parliamentary contests, upon construction, and upon the acquisition of land. Whether that estimate be an excessive one or not, there can be no doubt that the cost of construction and Parliamentary expense are estimated by the best authorities as being on an average not less than £10,000 per mile. That is a cost which has been found very largely prohibitive. Everybody knows that when the great railway companies are asked, as they frequently are asked by localities, to make branch lines, the localities are often told the lines will not pay. No doubt the reason why branch lines are so expensive is that they are constructed upon the scale applied to the great trunk lines. The estimates I have been able to obtain point to a probable reduction in the cost of making the proposed lines of from an average of £10,000 per mile to £3,500, or, according to some authorities, to £3,000 per mile. That obviously is a diminution so great that it offers a very strong inducement to a railway company to make a great number of branch lines which it does not find worth while to make at this moment. Therefore, even apart from what may be done by private enterprise, the formation of companies and the public spirit of landowners, who, I believe will in many cases feel that so great a benefit will be conferred upon their districts and properties by the construction of these lines that they will give the land necessary at a very low price, or perhaps for nothing at all—even apart from this I believe it will be worth the while of many of the great railway companies to construct these lines. I have been unable to obtain any accurate estimate as to what the difference in working will be, because it is clear everything must depend upon the circumstances of the particular district and the particular railway, but there can be no doubt that the reduction in the cost of working will also be very large—in many places it will probably amount to half. Looking at these considerations, I hope I have shown the House good reason to believe that the proposals which the Bill contains will supply a sufficient inducement to the railway companies to make these lines, and thus dispense with the necessity of a subsidy from any other quarter. I trust that if the House accepts the Bill they will see as a result of it a considerable addition to the number of railway communications in the country, and incidental benefits to those trades which are most directly concerned, and a sensible benefit to agriculture in many parts of the country. Feeling that this is a moment at which we ought to take every opportunity we can to give such a stimulus, I commend the Bill to the favourable consideration of the House.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : I have listened with great interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, who commenced by stating that this Bill is introduced mainly in order to give effect to the deep and abiding interest which Her Majesty's Government feel in the present condition of the agricultural interest. When I heard that I began to hope we were going to have unfolded some proposals which would prove of real and substantial assistance to that distressed industry. I cannot, however, help owning to a feeling of disappointment now that we have heard explained what we understand to be the principal measure which Her Majesty's Government have thought it their duty to introduce this Session in order to give aid and assistance and support to that industry which requires it so greatly. It is true the right hon. Gentleman was careful to say the proposal is nothing more than a palliative, not a remedy, for the evils under which agriculture is suffering, and which I rather gathered from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman are, in his opinion, mostly irremovable. [Mr. BRYCE: "Some of them."] Perhaps the Government will make another attempt during the present Session to deal with the removable evils. Will the Bill be a palliative for the evils and the miseries under which agriculture is suffering? I have great doubt whether it will be a palliative at all. As far as I can gather, the main effect of the Bill will be to give greater facilities for the making of light railways and to render the construction of such railways, perhaps less costly than lines now are. But who is going to undertake the making of these light railways? What inducement is held out to anybody to embark on the enterprise? The right hon. Gentleman referred to the views which have been expressed in various quarters, that under no circumstances ought public aid to be given for the construction of these railways. He pointed out that there are two sources only from which public aid can come. First of all there is the National Exchequer. But what did the right hon. Gentleman say on that point? Why, that it would be an entirely novel precedent, and even if it would not be an entirely novel precedent the experience of foreign countries who have adopted such a course leads us to put it on one side. Surely, when he said that the right hon. Gentleman spoke without remembering what has occurred already in the United Kingdom. Was not public aid given from the National Exchequer for the construction of light railways in Ireland? [Mr. BRYCE: "I am perfectly aware of that."] How am I to know the right hon. Gentleman was only referring to Great Britain when he said that this would be an entirely novel precedent in the legislation of this Parliament? [Mr. BALFOUR: "And in Scotland," And also in Scotland. Unless he was mistaken, aid had been given or had been promised by the Government for the construction of light railways in Scotland; and he should say that benefit from the policy of the Government was far more likely to be derived in parts of Scotland, especially in the Highlands, if applied there, than in any other part of the United Kingdom. Agricultural depression undoubtedly existed in Ireland; but it was nothing like so severe as he had reason to believe it was in numerous parts of Great Britain at the present time. And although State aid in the construction of light railways had been given in Ireland, where, as he had said, the agricultural depression was not so great as it was in England, when the subject was mentioned in regard to England, the President of the Board of Trade flew off at a tangent and said it would be so novel a precedent altogether, and one which the Government could not possibly adopt. One thing, however, he was glad to hear and that was that there was no possibility of any cost in connection with the light railways falling on the rates. If the agricultural party in the House had been offered this boon at the expense of the rates they would have declined it altogether. The condition of agriculture was so bad at the present time that agriculturists could not bear the slightest addition to their burdens which already fell upon them. Having said so much, he would not add anything that might appear to be hostile to the proposals of the Government. If the Government, by their proposals, facilitated the construction of light railways, he should be ready to heartily congratulate them on the success of their efforts. But he could not say he was so sanguine as to share the views of the Government. It seemed to him that the Government would be exceedingly fortunate if this measure, so far as he understood it, had any considerable effect towards the relief, or even the palliation of the agricultural depression. He sincerely hoped that the Government might be right and that he might be wrong. But he should say, on behalf of the agricultural interest, that if this Bill was the only measure the Government had to recommend during the present Session, for the relief of agriculture, there would be no bitter feeling of disappointment throughout the country. If this Bill was all the Government had to propose, it proved the truth of what he had said over and over again, that they did not recognise in the slightest degree the gravity of the agricultural situation or the sufferings which agriculturists were labouring under at present.

MR. J. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, the great object of the representatives of the agricultural interest was to secure that assistance towards the construction of light railways should be given not from the rates but from some Imperial source. That point could only be raised on the First Reading. If they were to allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading and then to move a clause wishing a charge on the public Exchequer they should find themselves entirely out of Court. He would, therefore, like to point out to the House a precedent as recent as 1889 for a grant being made out of public funds in aid of the construction of light railways. The Light Railways (Ireland) Act, 1889, authorised the Treasury to advance a capital sum as a free grant, or as a loan, or partly the one and partly the other for each of those undertakings. The Bill before the House, which was confined to England, proposed to mete out different treatment to English agriculturists. There were some principles of Irish legislation at any rate, which he should be glad to see applied to England. The boon proposed by the Bill was of a twofold character—first the Board of Trade was not to be so exacting in its requirements in regard to light railways, and the promoters of the light railways would not have to come to Parliament. This boon was expected to reduce the cost of the construction of the light railways by one-half. He failed to see it. Under the Act of 1864 the promoters of a railway, if there were no opposition to their scheme, could at present get a certificate from the Board of Trade and proceed without a Private Bill. The only advantage of the Bill before the House was, that in the case of opposition, the promoters went to the County Council instead of to Parliament. But he believed the cost for inquiry before the County Council would fall very little short of the cost of an inquiry before a Parliamentary Committee. The only economy would be in the fares to London. Then there would be a second inquiry before the Board of Trade.

MR. BRYCE: No, not an inquiry.

MR. GRANT LAWSON said, that if the Board of Trade were to decide appeals without having counsel it would hardly be a satisfactory arrangement in the interest of the landlords at least. It appeared to him that everything rested with the Board of Trade. The inducement to people to put money into the light railways was that the Board of Trade would not be so exacting in the future as they had been in the past. But what guarantee was there that there would be always as lenient a President of the Board of Trade as at the present time? or that the Board of Trade requirements, unless limited by the Bill, would still continue moderate when the era of interest in light railways had gone by? He was afraid the Bill would prove of no assistance to the agricultural districts.

COLONEL W. KENYON SLANEY Shropshire, Newport), remarked that the attention of the agricultural Members of the House had been concentrated for some time upon the measure which the right hon. Gentleman had asked leave to introduce. At the commencement of this Session they raised, to the best of their efforts, the needs and wants of agriculture, and they produced from the Leader of Her Majesty's Government in the House, nothing more than a long speech of chaff and ridicule. The only solace they could produce for the agricultural constituencies was an oration from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was noted in every newspaper report as being accompanied by roars of laughter repeated over and over again. They had, therefore, looked earnestly to the time when they were to have produced for their consideration a measure which was really to embody the the collective wisdom and deliberate judgment of Her Majesty's Government, as to what was possible to be done in the circumstances under which agriculture was suffering. And so to-night, when they heard the preamble of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, they were struck by the weighty words he used, and the intense earnestness of his remarks. The President of the Board of Trade, in asking for leave to introduce this Bill, had told them the Government felt that every possible step should be taken to remove the depression under which agriculture was suffering. Every possible step to remove the agricultural depression, and alleviate the needs and miseries of the agricultural districts, was therefore bound up in the measure which the right hon. Gentleman was now asking leave to introduce. All he could say was, that this measure did not fulfil the idea of hon. Members representing agricultural constituencies of every possible step that could be taken, and it would be regarded as a poor and paltry measure indeed. The Bill not only expressed every possibility of which the Government was capable in the direction of removing the depression, but it was also, they were told, to prevent the depopulation of their districts and provide the cheaper communication so essentially important to all other rural districts. Those were the opening remarks of the right hon. Gentleman; but he afterwards went a tone or two lower, and told them that after all he did not expect it to prove more than a palliative. If he had said that at first and left out the higher language with which he opened, it would have been more consonant with the conclusions the right hon. Gentleman had been able to put before them. What had they got before them? They had a measure which seemed to be conceived in a very simple spirit, and which was this—that if some people, but not the Government, chose to take an interest in this matter, then something might occur which, under possible circumstances, might be of benefit to some districts connected with agriculture. The right hon. Gentleman had been emphatic in his declaration that there was to be no aid whatever from the National Exchequer. Agriculture did not expect that sort of treatment from the custodians of the national purse. There were other circumstances connected with agriculture in which the National Exchequer had been willing to spend money. He had a recollection of a proposal in which it was thought advisable to devote £250,000 of national money under a measure dealing with the evicted tenants of Ireland; but to a measure connected with the unevicted tenants of England the National Exchequer could not contribute a single farthing. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman repudiated the idea of putting this burden upon the rates, and he must have recognised that those who were interested in agricultural districts would have considered any such suggestion as a mockery and a farce. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the money was to be provided by national sources and national causes, and among these he had mentioned the public spirit which he hoped would induce landowners to give their land for nothing, in order that these experiments might be tried. The right hon. Gentleman should have remembered that he brought forward this measure appealing to the public spirit of the landowners in the year subsequent to that in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer did the utmost that was possible to ruin these landowners once and for ever. When he besought the public spirit of the landowners to come to the relief of the National Exchequer he should remember that last Session, by the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the Government were engaged in mutilating and destroying the power of the landowners to do that which they were now appealed to do. If they could not get the landowners as a class to do that which the Government themselves would not do, they then said that the railway companies would possibly undertake this task. But they could not suppose that railway companies would undertake anything of the sort from the merely philanthropic point of view in which landowners had often done such things, and would now if the Government had not deprived them of the power. Railway companies could only do it where there was a prospect of a possible and legitimate profit to their shareholders, and it was a doubtful question whether in this case there would be such a profit. The agricultural districts will be divided roughly into two classes. There were the districts near the main track which, being already well served by existing railways, could not be expected to benefit by a subsidiary measure such as this; and there were the districts situate in mountainous or rather wild parts of the country, where from the conformation of the country the expense of laying lines would be greater. These, too, would be the districts where, from the thinness of the population, the distances over which the lines would have to run would be considerable, and those were the very circumstances which would make the lines less likely to pay. The facts were inconsistent with the idea that railway companies could make these lines as paying concerns except under exceptional circumstances. The Government were depending on a broken reed. They were depending on the generosity of a class of the population from whom they had taken away the power to be generous. They were depending on the business-like capabilities of another class whose interests would go in the very opposite direction to that in which they hoped to enlist them. After the experience of last Session, when the Government inflicted upon the agricultural interest a wound from which their very life blood was now flowing, it was almost a mockery and absurdity to try to heal that wound with the ridiculous sticking-plaster of this Bill.

*MR. E. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.) submitted that those who represented English constituencies had a right to claim that as long as public money was given for the purpose of benefiting agriculture in Ireland and Scotland, the same policy should be pursued as regards England. On the other hand, he was quite ready to admit that there were strong arguments against any State aid at all for such local enterprises as light railways. But then it must be the same in every part of the United Kingdom, and no exception must be made in favour of one part. England should no longer be taxed for developing the local resources of Ireland or Scotland and herself receive no such aid. In the past it might have been argued that Ireland and Scotland were poor countries, and that England was a rich country and could afford to do without a guarantee while paying for a guarantee for Scotland and for Ireland. But that was not the case at the present moment, and he thought that if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade were to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture, the latter would tell him that an imperial guarantee for the making of light railways would be as much required in Essex as it would be in the case of any county in Ireland or Scotland. The fact was, that the cost of making these light railways would have to come out of the pockets of the local landlords and farmers.

Mr. BRYCE: I said that the great railway companies might be induced to make the light railways.

*Mr. STRACHEY considered that it was not very likely the great railway companies would undertake the cost of making lines which might eventually compete with their own. It was also most improbable that people would sell out of the Consols or out of the ordinary railway companies' stock in order to invest their money in the construction of these light railways, whatever might have been the case in the old days. The landlords and farmers would not now be able, in view of the present depressed state of agriculture, to contribute very largely, if at all, towards the construction of these proposed lines. He thought pressure might be brought to bear upon the great railway companies to lower their present excessive rates by the threat of the construction of light railways. It would be possible in many cases to construct these lines with some probability of success, and the great railway companies would think it worth while to make concessions. He knew of one case in which a railway company had consented to reduce their rates for the carriage of milk by one-half in consequence of the local farmers threatening to send their milk by road instead of by railway. In the same way it would be quite open to the farmers and the landlords of the locality to say to a railway company—

> "If you do not reduce your rates we will ask the County Council to sanction the construction of a light railway through our district;"

and he believed that such a threat might be successful and would lead the railway company to reduce their rates. In many cases the reduction of railway rates would be as beneficial to a district as the construction of a light railway. In his view, however, the present Bill, if it were to pass, would remain a dead letter in too many cases.

Captain BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, that he was inclined to think that in some parts of the country, at all events, the provisions of the Bill might possibly operate beneficially, but he thought that it was open to doubt whether a permissive Bill of this character could be useful to any great extent. If the railway company were to agree to construct these light railways, some power should be conferred upon the Board of Trade to prevent the companies from charging excessive rates. The measure conferred upon the County Councils for the first time very large legislative powers, and authorised them to sanction the construction of these lines by mere resolution. County Councils ought to be compelled to consider in certain circumstances these resolutions carefully and fully. [Mr. Bryce observed that the hon. Member's point would be met by the Bill.] Then there was the question of guarantee. He quite agreed that they could not allow County Councils to burden the rates with these guarantees. The farmers would rise up in arms against such a proposal, agricultural distress being so great. A public guarantee was, of course, a difficult matter, but precedents were supplied by the cases of Scotland and Ireland.

Mr. BRYCE said, that as regarded Government interest in railways Scotland generally was no better off than England. What had been done by the Government for Scotland was done for districts corresponding to the distressed districts in Ireland.

Captain BETHELL (York, W.R., Holderness) said, that in Scotland there were railways which were guaranteed in order that suffering agriculturists might be assisted, and the principle applied in the cases of Ireland and part of Scotland might well be extended to England, where, partly owing to circumstances beyond their control and partly to the action of the present Government and their supporters, agriculture was in an extremely distressed condition. He was inclined to think that the precedent might have been followed in the urgent circumstances of the case, but it would of course be necessary to use very great care in applying it. Something ought certainly to be done to palliate the distress in those parts of the country where the great railways were unwilling to undertake new works. One could not, of course, expect very much from a Light Railways Bill. It was introduced, he understood, to relieve hon. Gentlemen opposite from the charge that they were not very solicitous for the welfare of the agricultural interest, a charge rightly based upon their action a year or two ago. But he was afraid that this poor little Bill would not do very much to assist them in this matter, and he feared also that it would not do very much to assist the agricultural interest.

Mr. W. CROSFIELD (Lincoln) thought that the chief merit of the measure lay in its simplicity and in the cheapness of the methods which it proposed. That being his view, he was not surprised that the hon. Member who represented Shropshire should have been somewhat more vigorous in his denunciations of the measure than the right hon. Member who represented Sleaford. The effectiveness of the measure would be different in different parts of the country. He could well believe that in Shropshire the element of cheapness would not be so conspicuous as in other counties. The hon. Member for Thirsk had expressed the wish that the bridges which should be built should be made wide enough to bear ultimately the ordinary gauge of railways. But this measure did not contemplate a plan of that kind. The light railways under consideration were to be accessories to rather than limbs of the great railway system of England and Wales. In Shropshire, no doubt, owing to the configuration of the country, it would be necessary to build bridges and make embankments, but in the Eastern counties there would be greater simplicity, and they would derive greater benefits and experience them sooner than the more hilly parts of the country. During the past week he had had the pleasure of visiting Holland, and he was very much struck with the extreme prosperity of the country. He could not help recognising the fact that that prosperity seemed a good deal to result from the network of steam tramways that existed in the country; which, by bringing not only produce but passengers to the stations of the larger towns, secured to Holland the benefits which he believed would ultimately result to this country from the Bill the House was now considering.

*Mr. W. E. M. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that in many parts of the country tramways had been constructed along roads. Their cost was considerably less than that of Light Railways, and it would be a matter of which the companies would have no right to complain if the Board of Trade required that, where it was possible, they should combine with the passenger traffic they now carried on certain facilities for dealing with agricultural produce. Two things would be required to make tramways available for this object, one that the tramway proprietors should be put under some obligation to deal with merchandise, and the other that they should be connected with the great railways. He felt sure that something might be done in this way to develop the resources of the agricultural districts. At the meeting in December, to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, a good deal was said, and a paper was circulated upon what had been done in Belgium. He was strongly impressed with the idea that the tramways and connecting links with railways in that country received substantial aid from the Government; and he did not believe that it would be possible in this country in the agricultural districts to carry out any system unless some aid was given by the Government. The prospect of the railway companies doing anything to promote these Light Railways did not seem to him likely to be realised. Everyone knew from what took place before the Railway Rates Committee, how little the railway companies cared to give any facilities for carrying British agricultural produce. The revival of agriculture was impossible if the railway companies were to be allowed to continue to put the rural districts at so great a disadvantage as they did at present. In the light of their past action, it was hardly to be expected that any help was to be got from the railway companies.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) said, that the case of Ireland was not a precedent. The position of Ireland was different from the condition of affairs which existed in agricultural districts at the present time here. When it was considered necessary to apply to the Exchequer for aid to make railways in Ireland, it was to save thousands of the Irish people from starvation in the congested districts. The Government had, therefore, done well to refuse any national funds for the purpose of the Bill in this country. Distress and depression existed in other industries besides that of agriculture, and if agriculture received this aid, in all probability other industries would claim it likewise.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) sympathised with the Gladstonian county Members on this subject. They seemed to be in an exceedingly depressed frame of mind. They had gone about the country talking so much about this Measure being one which would largely alleviate agricultural distress, that they were now to be pitied when they found that, in satisfaction of all their large expectations, they received a little Bill like this. If the Bill would not do any harm, certainly it would not do much good. A great deal of simplicity appeared to prevail if it was believed that the Bill would do much for agriculture, or that railway companies were likely to invest the money of shareholders in these Light Railways, or that capitalists would give much capital to further such undertakings. If the Government had been anxious to promote Light Railways in England they would have adopted the course which was adopted in Ireland; they would have proposed some material assistance so as to induce the companies or the capitalists to embark upon such undertakings. It was suggested that landowners would give their land for the purpose of enabling the railways to be made; but it was not always in their power to give land. Where land could be given a Light Railway might not be wanted, or it might probably not be successful if made. The cost, moreover, of obtaining the necessary order for making the railway, if the scheme was opposed, would certainly approximate towards the cost of the inquiries before the House of Commons, because counsel and skilled witnesses would have to be taken into the country. It was novel, also, to find that the safeguards thought to be necessary in similar undertakings should be dispensed with to such an extent as the right hon. Gentleman had suggested. Take the case of level crossings. He was under the belief that the strongest objection was entertained to level crossings being considered safe, even where they were attended, and if left unattended the danger was greater. He doubted whether there would be that enormous saving of expense which the right hon. Gentleman suggested. Upon the whole he must say that in common with every person in that House who took an interest in the agricultural districts, he viewed this Bill with great disappointment. He believed that it would do absolutely nothing to relieve the present agricultural depression. It might afford opportunity to certain speculators to bring out companies and take some money from the public, and a little might be spent in the agricultural districts, and it might promote and assist some railways here and there. But to suggest this as a policy for the alleviation or the palliation of agricultural distress was the height of absurdity. It was bringing forward a quack medicine to cure a serious disease. If this was the only measure that the Government had for the purpose of relieving agricultural depression, he very much sympathised with the Members who represent agricultural constituencies. He was very much inclined to think that they would spend a good many bad quarters of an hour in the country if they told their constituents that all the Government could do for them would be to pass an Act to allow them to make Light Railways at their own expense. Under those circumstances the Bill received a certain amount of indifference, which showed the general sense of the House with regard to it. Even Members who had spoken in favour of the Bill had spoken in a very qualified way. They had damned it with faint praise, but one, a strong supporter of the Government, had expressed his unqualified dissatisfaction with the measure. If only other Members would get up and say what they thought of the Bill, they might find out how many of them approved of it. He did not know that anything but barren sympathy was to be expected from the Government for the agricultural community. Having taxed the landed interest they now asked the landed interests to put their hands into their pockets and help themselves. He thought they would like to hear something from the Members for agricultural constituencies supporting the Government. This was the great measure, this was the only measure, which the Government had to relieve the agricultural interest. It seemed to him to be a measure which might do very little harm, but certainly would do very little good.

*Mr. J. W. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough), as representing one of those agricultural constituencies, referred to by the hon. Member. He wished to trouble the House with a very few remarks. He should have felt regret if the Government had proposed to construct these Light Railways at the expense of the communities. His belief was that relief from agricultural depression would not be found in any Measure brought in by any Government. The late Government was in Office for six long years. What was the state of agriculture during that period? It was in anything but a prosperous condition, yet he failed to recollect that the late Government brought in any Bill to deal with it. Agricultural depression was a landlords' question and, if by means of Light Railways or by any other means, the tenant farmers of England could be put into a position to pay their present rents, then he asserted that the expense of measures to bring about that change should be borne by the landed interests of the country, and that it would be monstrously unfair to expect that the community should be taxed for the benefit of the landowners.

*Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, that the hon. Member had asked the Opposition to state any measure which the late Government had brought forward for the relief of the agricultural interest. He would tell the hon. Member what they did. They relieved the pressure of local taxation on the agricultural interest, and they did not increase Imperial taxation on that interest, as the present Government had done. He ventured to agree with the statement that it was impossible, by any measure of this kind, to relieve the agricultural distress of the country. Unfortunately for the President of the Board of Trade his colleagues had for many months past heralded the present measure as that by which the Government intended to relieve the prevailing agricultural depression, though the right hon. Gentleman himself was not so foolish, and said, in fact, that he did not regard this Bill as more than a palliatory measure. It was no doubt, a useful little measure as far as it went, as it took away some of the restrictions in the existing law, in regard to the manner in which light railways could be sanctioned and the mode in which they were to be constructed and worked. He hoped it was not ominous of any results of the policy initiated that night that the measure which stood in the Orders immediately before this Bill was one for inquiring into fatal accidents. He entirely sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman's desire to make the Amendments in the law which he suggested, but it was a delusion that these could be palliatives for agricultural distress, and such a delusion ought to be dissipated for ever. Not merely had that been scouted by Members of the Opposition side, but also by the most strenuous supporters of the Government. His view was that in the case of light railways in agricultural districts these restrictions might safely be modified, and he did what he could in the Committee to assist the Government in this matter. The principles of the Bill were good and useful, but he feared that the measure would not have the effect which they all desired. He thought that the financial question was at the bottom of the whole subject. Landowners had made these railways largely in the past. They had made branches at great cost to themselves, which the great railway companies had starved and had afterwards purchased at half the original cost. That did not hold out much hope that the railway companies would go to the expense of constructing these railways themselves. The landowners could not afford, in the present condition of agriculture, to do it. They had been penalised by the legislation of last year; they had suffered from the general depression, and it was impossible, under present circumstances, for the English landowners to do what they had done in the past. They were driven to the conclusion that, though in some more favoured districts, the making of light railways might be promoted by the legislation now proposed, yet, where they were most wanted, and where agriculture was most depressed, this Bill would not secure their construction. He was very sorry that the Government had put their foot down against any policy of assistance by the State. He entirely differed from the view expressed by an hon. Member that the assistance given to the construction of railways in Ireland was to save thousands of people from starvation. The assistance was not given for that reason at all. In many districts where it was given in Ireland no question of starvation arose. The construction of railways was aided in Ireland to enable agricultural and other produce in that country to be taken more cheaply to market, and what was good for Ireland in this respect ought, if wanted, to be good for England, too. He defied the Government to get over that argument. He asserted that there were agricultural districts in England where such help was quite as much required as ever it was in Ireland. In saying what he had said he did not, however, forget the dangers of extravagance and jobbery in such matters. But the Irish example had taught them a good deal, and they had heard sufficient evidence before the Committee which had been appointed by the right hon. Gentleman to make it perfectly clear that there were modes in which assistance might be given, which would not be open to the extravagance and jobbery which might result from other proposals of the kind. He did not desire to press the Government to introduce any scheme of the sort into the present Bill. He knew that it was impossible to do so, and hoped the House would consider the Bill apart from any question of the kind, and entirely as a simple and small proposal for amending the existing law. It was really that and no more. The right hon. Gentleman was certainly entitled to some credit for having looked into the question, for having made these proposals, and for placing them before the House; and, therefore, he trusted that the Bill would not meet with opposition or with anything but reasonable criticism in its progress through the House. He should be glad to aid its passing, but he hoped that from that night forward they would hear no more about the Bill as a remedy for agricultural depression, and that if hon. Members opposite who represented agricultural districts found it necessary to go to their constituents and inform them that the Government were friends of the agricultural interest, they would find some better ground for proving that statement than any reference to this Bill.

Mr. J. G. WEIR complained that no attempt whatever was made by the Bill to benefit the Western Highlands and islands of Scotland, which were greatly in want of facilities of the kind proposed. It had been asked how the money for the intended Light Railways was to be obtained. The money, he had no doubt, would be found by the Company promoters and the landlords, mainly by the former, who were certain to be pretty active in extracting it from the pockets of the widow and the orphan. In common with several other Scotch Members, he regretted that the Bill would not apply in any way to the congested districts of Scotland, and he could not understand why the Government should be so ready to grant large sums to Ireland for the construction of light railways, while Scotch Members could not get a shilling out of them for similar purposes. The poor people in the Highlands, it seemed, might die like rabbits for aught the Government cared; and why? Because they were law-abiding and peaceful, and did not raise disturbances. In the island of Lewis, for example, a light railway was very badly needed, and it was absurd to suppose that the owners there could raise the money required to make it. In those circumstances, he asked the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary for Scotland, to consider the propriety of making some provision in the Bill for the Western Highlands and islands. The necessity was urgent and the demand reasonable, and he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that if no attention was paid to the request, he was resolved to take further action in the matter.

Leave being given, Bill presented accordingly, and read 1°; to be read 2° on Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 216.]

## TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said, before the Bill passed he would like a word of explanation. He understood that at present the National Exchequer was at the back of certain tramway arrangements in Ireland, and it was proposed to get rid of the guarantee and give a lump sum. They had, during the evening, been discussing the injustice of refusing to give to English railways that which they were now asked to give to Irish tramways. He thought the proposal under the circumstances, came with an exceeding ill grace from the Government.

*Mr. T. H. BOLTON asked whether these tramways were made for the purpose of saving the people from starvation or to relieve agricultural depression.

*Sir JOHN HIBBERT said, the Bill was really introduced at the request of the cesspayers of Ireland, who found that the payment of the guarantee bore very hardly upon them year by year. It was desired that there should be a commutation, so as to relieve them of that necessity. It would be an advantage to the Treasury that these guarantees should be commuted, and for this the consent of the Treasury, the Company, and the Grand Jury was necessary. This Bill was asked for by the representatives of every section of Ireland, including the Ulster Conservative Members, and he hoped the hon. Member for Shropshire would not persist in his objection. The Bill had nothing to do with the one which they had been previously discussing.

Colonel KENYON-SLANEY said, the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman was adequate so far as it went; it enabled them to understand that it was introduced for the convenience of Ireland and of the Treasury. If he did not stop it that night it would be because he was certain that it would be against the feelings of many of them who were only too anxious that something should be done, but he would again point out that it came with an exceeding ill grace from the Government to ask for the boon for one country which they had denied to the other

MR. E. STRACHEY asked, whether the Bill would increase the Imperial liability?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT replied, that it would diminish it.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON remarked, that the Secretary to the Treasury had stated the Bill was desired by the Irish cesspayers. These were the Irish ratepayers, and the Bill was, therefore, to vote money from the Imperial Treasury, it was true, but to relieve Irish ratepayers.

SIR JOHN HIBBERT: It relieves Irish ratepayers, but does not impose any additional burden on the taxpayers. It does two good things, and is, therefore, twice blessed.

MR. W. L. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he understood the terms of commutation were to be left to the future. No terms had been settled as to what the Imperial contribution was to be.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT: Not exceeding 33 years.

MR. JACKSON asked when that was to be taken? It might be taken at the very time when the condition of the tramway from which the contribution was being commuted was at its worst point. He took exception to the statement that an additional burden would not be imposed on the British taxpayer, and said it was a strong order at 12 o'clock at night to ask the House to pass a Bill of that contentious kind through the Committee stage.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, that no arrangement could be carried out without the consent of the Treasury, and they would not sanction any arrangement which was not perfectly safe for the taxpayers. This security was fully provided by the Bill. As the Treasury was to be an assenting party to every case of commutation, the objection that had been taken did not hold good.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had a confidence in the Treasury which he could not expect to be shared by unofficial Members. He hoped the President of the Board of Trade had given attention to this discussion, and in particular to the remarks made by the hon. Member for Shropshire. As he understood the contention of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleague, it was that the cesspayers in Ireland had found these tramways to impose an intolerable burden upon themselves; and he trusted the President of the Board of Trade would bear in mind that piece of information in the discussion of his own Light Railways Bill, and would not impose an equally intolerable burden upon the ratepayers in the English constituencies.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, he was willing to report Progress if that were desired.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT (Cheshire, Macclesfield) said, he hoped that no redemption of the Government guarantee would take place except with the consent of a large majority—say two-thirds—of shareholders.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT replied that he was going to propose an Amendment to carry out this suggestion.

Progress reported.

### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BILL.

Passed through Committee without Amendment and read 3°.

### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

Return ordered, arranged according to counties, showing the number of accounts of depositors in Post Office Savings Banks in the United Kingdom remaining open on the 31st day of December, 1894, together with the amount, inclusive of interest, but excluding fractions of a pound, standing to the credit of those accounts.—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

## *MOTION.*

### FIRES (FALSE ALARMS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to prohibit the giving False Alarms of Fires.

Bill presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 217.]

The House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, 26th April 1895.*

The House met at Three of the Clock.

### JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented,—of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales for 1893, Part I. (Criminal); with Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State to revise the criminal portion of the Judicial Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### NAVY (ENGINES AND BOILERS OF SHIPS).

Copy ordered, "of Tables of Horse Powers, Weights, &c., of Engines and Boilers of certain Ships of the Royal Navy."—*(Mr. Edmund Robertson).*

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 234.]

### FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS (EXPENSES).

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any expense incurred in any special inquiries and re-examinations by certifying surgeons under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend and extend the Law relating to Factories and Workshops (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—*(Mr. Secretary Asquith.)*

### STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

*Sir **JULIAN GOLDSMID** reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Mr. Stuart-Wortley to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, in the place of Sir Julian Goldsmid.

Report to lie upon the Table.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### VOLUNTEER COMBINED DRILL.

Colonel **WYNDHAM MURRAY** (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether it is the case that certain Volunteer battalions could not be accommodated at Easter in any places where ground could be obtained for combined drill free from disturbance, such as to prevent useful instruction; and whether, if this is likely to be the case in future years, he will now take steps to secure ground where Volunteer brigades can receive proper military instruction at that period of the year?

*The **SECRETARY of STATE for WAR** (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs): No representations of such a difficulty have been received at the War Office. I would observe that to "accommodate" the Volunteers we should have to encamp them, and this is not considered advisable at Easter.

### ABERDARON DISTRICT BOARD, PWLLHELI.

Mr. **STANLEY LEIGHTON** (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education, (1), whether he is aware that the Clerk to the Aberdaron United District Board, Pwllheli, has been fined for refusing to allow a ratepayer to inspect the books of the Board, that the books are still kept at the clerk's private house, and that the Board have neglected to carry out the suggestion of the magistrates as to providing an office where such books may be open to the ratepayers' inspection; (2), whether he is also aware that the district auditor has on several occasions refused to pass the accounts of the Board; (3), whether the treasurer of the Board is justified in refusing to allow any member of the Board to inspect all the books of the board at any board meeting; and (4), whether he is aware that the chairman and treasurer of the board have for years past had commercial transactions with the board, and, if so, what steps he is prepared to take in the matter?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND, York, W. R., Rotherham): I understand that some of the alleged irregularities have been reported to the Education Department by a member of the Aberdaron School Board. They would appear for the most part to be cognisable by courts of law, and such as the Education Department have no power to deal with under the Elementary Education Acts. No report adverse to the accounts of the Board has been received up to the present time by the Department from the District Auditor. As to the third paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, this would appear to be a matter of order at any actual meeting of the Board, but Section 87 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870 gives power to any ratepayer to inspect the Board's books at all reasonable times, and imposes a penalty, recoverable by summary process, on any person who hinders such inspection.

## LOCAL TAXATION.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will inform the House of the amount of local taxation, either before or on the same night as the Chancellor of the Exchequer makes his Budget statement, in order that the House may know the full amount of the public burdens, local and Imperial, before assenting to the taxation for the year?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): Somewhat similar questions were asked by the hon. Member in 1892 and 1893; and I can only repeat the answers which were then given, viz., that the great complexity of local expenditure, the very large number (28,000) of the Local Authorities from whom accounts have to be obtained, and the length of time necessarily occupied in the audit of those accounts, made it impossible to present to the House, in connection with the Budget statement, a statement of the expenditure and indebtedness of Local Authorities similar to that furnished with regard to Imperial finance. Very full and detailed statements on the subject are supplied by the Local Taxation Returns presented to the House.

## INFLUENZA.

MR. JOHN AIRD (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board if further inquiries will now be made to ascertain the cause of, and as to the best treatment for, influenza, outside medical aid being sought to strengthen the advice and opinions already given by the Medical Officers of the Department; and, whether information could be obtained from other countries for useful comparison as to the methods adopted for dealing with the malady?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir WALTER FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): The Local Government Board have instituted more than one inquiry as to the cause of influenza, and the results of those inquiries are contained in Reports which have been presented to Parliament. In dealing with this matter the Board have availed themselves of aid outside their own medical staff. The subject continues to receive the attention of the Board, and at the present time they are employing outside aid in the study of the pathological and bacteriological relations of feverish cold (the so-called "influenza cold") with influenza proper. Information is from time to time received from other countries respecting influenza, and an opportunity is thus afforded for a comparison, in reference to this disease, of administrative measures of various kinds.

## THE LONDON CAB TRADE.

MR. AIRD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now state when the recommendations affecting the cab industry will be circulated?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. H. H. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The Bill for the prevention of "bilking" has been prepared, and I hope to introduce it shortly. Of the other recommendations made by the Committee, those which affect the police control and inspection and administration of the cab service have been made the basis of a scheme, which has been drawn up by the Commissioner of Police, and which will, I hope, be very soon in a condition to be carried into effect. The recommendations of the Committee on the disposal of the revenue and the police-court arrangements present greater difficulties, but they have not been lost sight of, and I hope very shortly to be able to announce a decision upon them. The recommendations as to the abolition of the privileged system, the extension of the radius, the consolidation of the statutes, and some other points would all require legislation, which I cannot promise to introduce at present.

### THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

MR. H. T. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Admiralty that the holiday for Her Majesty's Birthday is to be kept on Friday 24th May in the Dockyards, and in London on Saturday the 25th; and whether, as this will compel the men to lose Saturday, the rule being to close the Yards following a holiday on a Friday, the authorities will have the holiday on Saturday, and thus enable the men to work on Friday?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Admiralty being desirous that the Dockyard employes should have a whole holiday on the occasion of Her Majesty's Birthday, and that they should suffer no loss of wages in connection therewith, have decided that the Yards shall be closed from midday on Friday the 24th until Monday morning the 27th.

### ALLEGED PERJURY CASE.

MR. S. WOODS (Lancashire, Ince): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, at the forthcoming inquiry to be held at Pendleton, near Manchester, in reference to the alleged perjury which it is stated led to the imprisonment of a collier named John Kelsall (who has now been released from prison), he will cause the woman Elizabeth Curran, who is now in Knutsford Gaol, to be in attendance at such inquiry; whether the policeman, against whom certain charges are made, will also be in attendance; and if he will cause the inquiry to be a public one.

MR. ASQUITH: My hon. Friend's question appears to be founded on a misapprehension. So far as I am aware no inquiry of the kind referred to is about to be held. Some time ago I was requested by the Chief Constable and the Corporation of Salford to investigate charges which it was said had been made in a section of the Press against the borough police in relation to this case. I replied that I could not undertake such an inquiry, unless specific allegations put forward on the authority of responsible persons were brought to my notice. Up to the present this has not been done. I take the opportunity of suggesting that great caution should be exercised in accepting the statements circulated in relation to the action both of the Home Office and of the local police in this matter. The case is one of the most difficult, and in some of its aspects, quite the most unsatisfactory with which I have had to deal. I will only say at present that if, when the Home Office Estimates come to be discussed, any hon. Member thinks fit to call attention to it, I shall be prepared to explain and to vindicate to the full every step which has been taken from first to last by myself and by my Department.

### THE POTATO CROPS IN ROSS-SHIRE.

MR. J. G. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has yet received any information as to the extent of the failure of the potato crop in the Lochbroom district of Ross-shire, and the needs of the people for a supply of seed potatoes; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to take steps to prevent the serious distress which is certain to arise in that district?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross): My right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland replied to this question yesterday, that he was in communication with the Local Government Board in Edinburgh on the subject, and would be in a position to reply to the hon. Member for Perth who has a similar question on Monday.

### ASSISTANT OVERSEERS.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether in every rural parish the Parish Council or parish meeting, as the case may be, have the power to appoint a paid assistant overseer; and whether the salary of an assistant overseer so appointed is payable out of the expenses of the Parish Council or parish meeting, or out of the poors' rate?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: In a rural parish where there is no assistant overseer appointed by the guardians, the Parish Council or parish meeting can appoint an assistant overseer, and his salary would be payable by the overseers out of the poor rate. Where there is an assistant overseer appointed by the guardians it does not appear to me that a Parish Council or parish meeting could properly appoint an officer to perform duties which devolve on the existing officer.

## DENBIGH CATTLE MARKET.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the bye-laws for the regulation of the new cattle market at Denbigh were sent by the Denbigh Town Council to the Department for confirmation in November last; whether he is aware that, up to the present, no definite reply has been received from the Department upon that subject; and whether, in view of the serious inconvenience caused by the continued closing of the cattle market, he will give the matter his immediate attention?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Some objections were received by the Local Government Board to the proposed bye-laws, and some correspondence has taken place on the subject. The Board have now revised the bye-laws, and a communication will be sent to the Town Council on the subject to-day.

## COCK-FIGHTING.

MR. C. B. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that a large crowd attended a cock-fight, in which nine mains were fought, within a field near Bishopston, in the county of Renfrew, on Tuesday of last week; whether he is aware that, in consequence of a decision given in the High Court of Justiciary in 1892, it is impossible for the county authorities to interfere and prevent these exhibitions; whether it is the case that, in England, cock-fighting is illegal; and whether the Government will take steps to so amend the law of Scotland in regard to cock-fighting as to prevent future exhibitions of this kind?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan and Kinross): The matter referred to in the question has been officially brought under my notice. I believe that, as the law at present stands, county authorities in Scotland cannot prevent cock-fighting. It is the case that cock fighting has been held to be illegal in England, and the Government propose at once to introduce a Bill for the purpose of making it illegal in Scotland. I hope we may rely on the support of hon. Members in all parts of the House in passing the measure speedily into law.

## WOMEN IN BRITISH INDIA COAL MINES.

*MR. A. D. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he has received any Report from the Inspector relating to the employment of women in coal mines in British India; and, if not, can he say when the Report may be expected?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.), answering in the absence of Mr. HENRY FOWLER: The first Report of the Inspector of Mines in India has been received, and in it the employment of women in Indian coal mines is discussed.

*MR. PROVAND asked the hon. Gentleman if he would see that the Report was circulated?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL had no doubt the Secretary of State for India would do so.

## TRADE AND NAVIGATION RETURNS.

MR. A. M. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can explain why, in the accounts relating to trade and navigation, the articles classified as earthenware, china ware, parian, and porcelain, are shown in the tables of exports, but are not mentioned in the tables of imports; and, whether he can state the value of such articles annually imported in this country from abroad?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE

(Mr. THOMAS BURT, Morpeth): The imports of china or porcelain and earthenware are shown in the "Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom," the value of such imports having amounted to £625,532 in 1893. The annual statement for 1894, which will show last year's imports, will be issued in a week or two. These imports are not shown in the "Monthly Accounts of Trade, because only the principal articles, whether of import or export, can be separately distinguished owing to exigencies of space.

### JAPAN AND CHINA.

**SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT** (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now inform the House as to the conditions of the Treaty of Peace between Japan and China?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I am not yet in a position to make a statement.

**SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT**: Can the hon. Baronet give us any idea when he will be able to give us this important information?

**SIR E. GREY**: As soon as I am in a position to make an official statement I shall take the first opportunity of doing so.

### WORKMEN'S DWELLINGS IN SCOTLAND.

**MR. J. CALDWELL** (Mid Lanark): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when he hopes to introduce the Bill giving power to County Councils and to Parish Councils in Scotland to acquire land for workmen's dwelling houses; whether he will give that Bill precedence over the Local Government (Scotland) Bill; and, when he proposes to introduce a measure to abolish the Standing Joint Committee in counties in Scotland?

***THE LORD ADVOCATE** (in the absence of Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN): The Secretary for Scotland hopes to introduce the Bill for giving power to County Councils and to Parish Councils in Scotland to acquire land for workmen's dwelling houses. He has no present intention of giving the Bill precedence over the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, or of introducing a measure to abolish the Standing Joint Committee in counties in Scotland.

### PUBLICATION OF WILLS.

**MR. J. AIRD**: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, having regard to the increased payment now made for death duties, wills, in respect of details, can, where desired by the family, be held for the use of the Department only, not for publication in the newspapers.

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY** (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham), in the absence of THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: No details of wills are published in the newspapers by any Department under the control of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Member is aware that wills are open to public inspection on the payment of a fee. This matter is under the control of the Probate Court.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### THE RATING OF GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.

Order read for Committee of Supply.

On the Motion that Mr. SPEAKER do leave the chair,

***SIR ALBERT ROLLIT** (Islington, S.) rose to call attention to the exemption of Government property from local rating; and to move—

> "That the exemption of Government property from rating is wrong in principle and unjust in its operation to the local authorities and to the general body of ratepayers, and ought to be terminated by legislation placing such property on an equality for rating purposes with that of other ratepayers."

He proposed, he said, by the Motion to afford the House an opportunity, for the first time, of giving a clear and definite decision as to the principle and practice of the exemption of the Government property from rating, and he hoped the facts which he and other Members would be able to adduce, would convince the House that a great hardship and injustice existed in this matter to large bodies of ratepayers in different parts of the country, and that what was most unjust to the local authorities would be put an end to in consequence of the Resolution which he hoped the House would pass. He had had reports from, and correspondence with, the local authorities in nearly all parts of the country and London; and the feeling, both in London and the provinces was both strong and universal that the Resolution was one which should be favourably considered by the House. This was the period of the quinquennial valuation, and the assessment committees and overseers of the local authorities were looking with great interest to this subject as a means of materially reducing the burden of local taxation. When he spoke of the Government property, he ought, perhaps, to use the plural term Governments, because whatever complaint he made to-day was one which could be used against past, as well as the present, Government. He had to acknowledge that the present Government, through the Secretary to the Treasury, had shown a laudable desire, so far as was consistent with the present law, to meet the evil and materially reduce it. This was not a party, but a municipal question of very great importance, and he trusted the Chancellor, like his predecessor in 1874, would make his approaching Budget the occasion of redress to the ratepayers. He had modified his Resolution in two points. In the first place, before such a modification, he asked for a Committee of Inquiry, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer courteously intimated to him that there was a difficulty in regard to that—chiefly a constitutional one, and as he wished to press nothing which was objectionable, provided the main object in view could be achieved, he had reserved that portion of the subject. But he thought there were evils to be both considered and removed. He did not wish them to be removed inconsiderately, and if, even now the right hon. Gentleman should see his way to suggest the appointment of a Committee, that was a proposal with which he should be very happy to fall in. Secondly, he had taken from his Motion one part relating to Crown debts. The subject was cognate, but its inclusion would complicate the matter, and he would only use it for the purpose of pointing a contrast, which was this: When the Crown had money owing to it from a ratepayer, it not only demanded priority over other debts, but non-payment was followed by, it might be, perpetual imprisonment. On the other hand, when the Government owed money for the rating of premises, it did not subject any Member of the Treasury Bench to similar penalties. In other words, when the Government was a debtor, it was lenient to itself, but when the Government was a creditor it put into operation obsolete processes which were now a gross and cruel anachronism, and which were really abandoned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Debate on his (Sir Albert Rollit's) Amendment on the Budget Bill, very much in consequence of the representations made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition; and if the abandonment had not taken place, he ventured to say the Government on that occasion would have been defeated. That was the only allusion he should make to the subject of Crown debts. It had often been said that it ought to be the duty of the Government to set an example, and he hoped it would set an example, with reference to Crown debts in future. It was no good example to refuse to pay adequately the burdens upon its own property, and to cast those burdens upon the people; and in neither case was the example one to be followed. During the Debates upon the Budget there was a well-grounded feeling that the incidence of local taxation was unjust so far as the landed interest was concerned. No one would forget the controversy on that point, and the remarkable speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) which demanded, and which, he hoped, would receive an answer through the medium of a full inquiry by a Committee, which had now become a necessary preliminary to revision. The point to which he desired to call attention was that here was a means, not by way of a grant in aid or anything of that sort, to which system there were strong fiscal objections, but as a recourse of right, by which the pressure of local taxation might be at least somewhat remedied. He believed also it was the first step to a very considerable readjustment which would be more equitable than the present system, and he thought he should be able to show that there was a frequent opportunity arising in the House of raising this question upon the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill. In the original statute imposing rating—namely, the first Poor Law which was passed in the reign of Elizabeth, it was clearly contemplated by Parliament that personal, no less than real, property should be rated for the maintenance of the poor, and it was only a technicality in the Tudor times which saved the Crown—a technicality under which it was held ultimately that the Crown was not bound to pay its rates though Parliament had proposed and all but said that it should, and though judges had for a considerable period carried out the intention of Parliament to the best of their ability. That technicality was simply that the Crown was not named in the Statute, and as it could not be bound except by a clear expression, it was in the result held that the Crown was not called upon to pay for the rating of its property, and not liable to be rated. So the rating of the inhabitants in respect of personal property had been disused, and in the early part of the present reign an Act was passed exempting stock-in-trade and personal property from rating. That Statute was re-enacted in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill year by year, but no one had yet taken the opportunity of pointing out the equities in the matter and of stating the strong grounds there were for inquiry as to the contributions which ought to be made by personal, no less than by real, property. The consequence of this process of legal technicalities and fictions had been that there had been a gradual accession of Government property which had escaped local taxation, although that property frequently comprised industrial works of the largest character which had been making revenue, which had added to the poor in the neighbourhood, and enlarged, to the prejudice of the parishes, the burdens for their maintenance. These exemptions of Crown, and, on that pretext, of public property, applied to all parts of the country, and included Government offices—comprising nearly half of some parishes in London, and notably Westminster—royal palaces, the Houses of Parliament, prisons, military and naval, and civil, Government factories, public charitable institutions, post offices, arsenals, dockyards, barracks, militia premises, Government hospitals, the Mint, law courts and record offices, county courts, police stations, county buildings, judges' lodgings, the post offices in every town and village, the Custom Houses, Inland Revenue and Excise Departments, Coastguard establishments, the British and other Museums, the National and other Galleries, Government literary, artistic, and scientific Institutions (such as the School of Mines and the Geological Museum), certain of the parks, Kensington Gardens and Primrose Hill, Brompton Cemetery (for the Crown, like the grave, takes and seldom gives), some of the bridges, notably Chelsea Bridge, which was exempted on the ground that it was erected by the Commissioner of Works, some county and municipal and other species of property, which he would deal with in a more detailed way, while, in the case of county property generally, there was no fund out of which the rates could be met, and so it escaped. In the case of the Lighthouses Parliament was to blame, through a clause in the Merchant Shipping Act, although the Government collected the light dues from shipping and yet insisted on its own ships being free from that taxation. Churches and chapels and voluntary scientific institutions, and volunteer storehouses were also statutorily exempt. Among other Parliamentary exemptions a most unjust one was the case of the Law Courts, which was protested against by the Strand local authority, because they were rated under the Act of Parliament on the basis of what was paid by the property which formerly stood on the site, and this sum could not be increased. He had now given a tolerably long list of properties which were taken out of the general law and placed, so far as the general property owners and occupiers were concerned, in a very invidious position, but the worst case of all was the telegraphs, which were rated under the old companies and were to be rated under the Transfer Act, but a Victorian like a Tudor technicality intervened and made them free, because of an omission from of the Act of any remedy for the recovery of the rates. What was the effect of such a system upon local taxation in these days of rising rates? He had received from all parts an infinity of letters expressing the strong sense of injustice felt by local authorities. The London County Council valuation was, that in the Metropolis no less than from £40,000 to £50,000 a year was lost in rates owing to these exemptions. That was in Government property alone, and taking into account only the valuation of the buildings, and putting out of sight entirely the value of the sites. He did not, however, accept the County Council's valuation. One or two authors of repute and statistical knowledge had shown that the loss was much more probably £87,500, and Mr. Pickersgill had estimated it at no less than 50 per cent. He was informed by many of the towns, especially the military stations and the dockyards, that all the advantages of rating were most sedulously demanded by the Government authorities—the best sanitation, drainage, and the like, but when the reciprocal burden of payment was sought to be imposed for them, the greatest reluctance was shown to making an adequate contribution, even where the Government competed with the ratepayers, as in the products of prison labour. Thus the State benefited, while the locality paid, which, if anything, ought to be reversed; but all he desired was equality. What had some of the judges, who might certainly be taken to be impartial observers, said in reference to this system? He would quote Lord Chancellor Campbell and Mr. Justice Erle, who said—

> "Such burdens should be borne by all parties in occupation of the rateable property of the parish."

And again—

> "An exemption from rating in reality means that the rest of a parish shall pay the rates that would otherwise be due on the exempted property."

*Sir Albert Rollit.*

And further—

> "There is no reason why the rates should be paid by the Government's neighbours any more than the Government should occupy property without paying rent."

The cases were completely *in pari passu.* Other objections were, that these exemptions cast a special burden on particular localities. It was a most significant circumstance that so many Government Offices had dispossessed private property, and so removed a source of municipal income from the localities in which they were situate; of which the Palace of Westminster—the Houses of Parliament—was a notable example. The right hon. Gentleman indicated he was afraid he was not going to mention that after all the Government had some conscience. He did not think however, it was a completely developed conscience. Contrary to the law of evolution, the conscience was complete to begin with, but it dropped away afterwards, and now there were only the relics of a conscience, which the right hon. Gentleman was doing his best to develop. For, in 1874 a Treasury Minute was issued, in which it was said:—

> "The Chancellor of the Exchequer brings before the Board the engagement given by him to Parliament on the occasion of his proposing the Budget for that year, that property under the control of Her Majesty's Commissioners and not in the possession of any other occupier throughout the United Kingdom, should bear its due share of all local burdens."

That was afterwards supplemented by a Memorandum drawn up by the Treasury, in which these words occur:—

> "That Government property is to contribute to local rates equally with other property in the parish in which that is situate."

That was the conscience of 1874. But while he praised the right hon. Gentleman for what he had been doing by recent revisions, he maintained that the increases which he was making, and which were vast, were the measure of the injustice of the departure from the engagement to Parliament in 1874. How had the Government met the promise of 1874? It was the old Tudor story of the Crown not being bound to do anything. The Government still adhered to the principle of purely voluntary contribution, and what they paid was a kind of "conscience money," and, like conscience money generally, the payments were not frequent and not very large in amount. What was still more open to question, was that the Government, when its conscience asserted itself, insisted on protecting itself by making its own valuation of the property. If every man were his own valuer for rating purposes, what would become of the resources of the local authorities? The doctrine "every man his own valuer" was only made seriously in one place—namely, in Hyde Park on Sundays, when Socialist orators declared that no legal compulsion was necessary, and that if the matter were left to the consciences of individuals their contributions to the rates would be still larger than under the existing system! He proposed to give some typical instances of the undervaluation of Government property, but he would not repeat what he had recently stated to the House. A high authority on the Strand Local Board had written to him saying that Somerset House was still very inadequately rated, although there had been a revision in this case. The group of Treasury buildings, comprising the Foreign, India, Home, Colonial, and Local Government Board offices were valued by the Treasury at £11,600 a year, while the County Council valued the sites alone at £32,350. The Westminster Local Authority had asked the Treasury to increase the valuation to £25,000. The present contribution, it would be seen, was less than half this amount, and was grossly inadequate. The valuation of the Palace of Westminster for contribution purposes was less than the valuation of the Westminster Palace Hotel. It was at the rate of £550 per acre, whilst in the vicinity there were valuations of private properties at the rates of £8,000, £10,000, and even £20,000 per acre. In Westminster alone, Government property was undervalued by £150,000, or 50 per cent. For Burlington House, comprising the University of London, which yielded a profit to the State from the fees paid by the students, the Geological Museum, the War Office, the Board of Agriculture, and other offices, the total valuation was only £12,000 a year and the contribution £2,596. It was evident that this group of buildings did not contribute its fair share towards the rates. In some vestries testimony was borne to the sincere efforts made by the Secretary to the Treasury to improve matters, but in a great many others it was stated that the under-valuations were gross and that the employment of the Treasury's own valuer was used as a lever in order to secure acquiescence in the proposals made to them by the Government. The vestries were told—

> "You must take what you can get and be thankful, for we are not bound to give you anything."

A communication which he had received from a Vestry Clerk showed how this subject was dealt with by the Treasury valuer. A passage in this letter ran—

> "The Government Valuer called upon me and drew attention to the fact that the hereditament was not legally rateable. My overseers considered they had no option but to reduce the figures, which they did; but, had this been private property, we could have maintained our figures before the Assessment Committee."

He read this passage to show that, taking his stand on the non-liability of the Government, the valuer could use a power which ought not to be exercised to coerce local authorities into doing that which was inequitable. It had been said on a former occasion that this was purely a London question, and one hon. Member had dwelt upon the fact that Londoners had the use of the parks free. His own observation, however, led him to the conclusion that the people who used Hyde Park mostly were foreigners and country cousins.

But to show that this was not only a London question, he proposed to call attention to the many complaints which he had received from the provinces. From Hull came the complaints that the valuation of Government property was very much below what it ought to be; that it had been stationary for many years in spite of the rise in value of property; and that the post office was certainly valued for contribution purposes at not more than half its proper value. At Weymouth and Portland where a harbour of refuge had been made, where there were large prisons and where the Government exacted the most perfect drainage and sanitation, the contribution was only £416. In the case of Southampton the Report was that the local authorities were anything but satisfied, and that the valuation of the Ordnance Survey buildings and Custom House was only half what it ought to be. Sheffield was not satisfied, "the valuation being much below what it ought to be." From Plymouth came the complaint, "We are most dissatisfied; we have to take what the Government will give," and it was said that the contribution was less by a penny in the £1 than that paid by other ratepayers. In Dover there had been no re-valuation since 1874, and in the case of one parish not since 1861, when the property was valued at the rate of 2 per cent., when it ought to have been 5 per cent. Values had greatly increased since then, but there had been no corresponding extension of contribution, which was much below what it ought to be. Derby, the town of the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, wrote that the valuations there were absurdly low, those for the post office and gaol "being too little by half." At Huddersfield the corporation was very dissatisfied. The Government valuations were ridiculous; there had been no re-valuation since 1877, although other properties had been revised many times since then. In Windsor there was the utmost dissatisfaction. The town council considered that they were most harshly and unjustly treated. The ratings for the barracks were old and obsolete, and the Corporation had asked that they might be allowed to appoint an independent valuer, but access to the property was refused. The letter written to him contained these words—

> "The Government contend that the contribution is voluntary, and that it must be accepted."

At Portsmouth the Corporation "were by no means satisfied," but Government claimed ordinary rights whilst saying that the question of contribution must be left entirely in their own hands. Leeds complained of the valuation of the barracks; Leicester of the valuation of the prison; Newcastle-on-Tyne of the general lowness of the valuation; King's Lynn of the inadequacy of the valuation except in the case of the Post Office. To show that this grievance was not confined to towns, he would refer to a portion of the County of Essex, where there had been great agricultural distress and disastrous explosions. Even in the case of rural Waltham no independent valuation had been allowed, and they were told by an hon. Member that the contribution was extremely inadequate. Moreover, an independent valuation had been refused, and the Secretary of the Treasury had admitted the need of revision. The figures he had used had been given to him by those local authorities whose intention to state the matter accurately could not for a moment be questioned, but he expected that the House would hear from the Secretary to the Treasury that he had made many revisions, and that the Local Authorities were satisfied. It was not probable that the Government valuer would give satisfaction to those who have to receive the contributions. Any partiality on his part was probably unconscious, but, nevertheless, it probably existed. He would also point out to the right hon. Gentleman that his legal plea of accord and satisfaction was a very dangerous one. It admitted an evil and a grievance, and unless it was proved completely, it was damaging. So far from its being capable of proof, he had shown from figures that it had not been established, unless his figures could be proved to be incorrect. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to take the only possible step towards a complete and adequate remedy. It was, he thought, open to him to do so. He was certain the right hon. Gentleman had aimed in that direction, and he hoped the sum involved would soon be raised. The only possible basis of permanent satisfaction was the basis of equality in liability and contribution, equality between Government property on the one hand and that of ordinary ratepayers on the other. Equality was equity. What was the distinction between Government property and other public properties, such as town halls, board schools, libraries, and baths? Recently an institution of a public character, the Imperial Institute, had to appeal to the Courts from what was considered an excessive assessment. Why should that institute be called upon to pay highly in order to exempt other public property which was better able to bear the burden? The only difference was between the local and Imperial interest, and in his opinion, if either, though equality would prevent either, the Imperial interest, which was the more wealthy, should suffer, rather than the local, which was so heavily burdened. Why should the Government seek to persist in appointing their own valuer? *Nemo debet esse judex in propria sua causa.* No one could be trusted to undertake the duty of settling a matter in which he had so great an interest; and however the valuer might try to do his duties to his employers, he must unconsciously lean in the direction of their interests. Why should the Assessment Committees be distrusted? In London alone they had to value between 35 and 40 millions' worth of property annually. Any decision of theirs could be safeguarded by an appeal to the Courts, and by that means he ventured to think that justice would be done, some uniformity would be attained, which was not the case at present, and contentment with the administration of the law would be promoted. In conclusion, he would deal with two objections which had been raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had pleaded that he had not the money. That was not a plea that the House of Commons could recognise at all. If the House was convinced that injustice existed, they would be only too willing to set other considerations aside and to help the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do justice to the localities. The right hon. Gentleman's other plea was wholly unfounded, and based on a complete misconception. The plea was that these were to be grants in aid to the towns. The local authorities wanted no grant in aid. They simply wanted their just right and due. The whole system of grants in aid was open to very great question, and if this was a grant in aid he would not ask it for any municipality in the country. So far from being a grant in aid, or a subsidy, this was simply a demand on the Government to pay their just debts to the localities. The Government, however, had found out a new way of paying old debts, by appointing their own valuer and putting themselves on a different footing to other debtors. This was, he believed, the first time that a plain and direct issue on the subject had been placed before the House of Commons. The House was now asked to express an opinion in favour of either justice or injustice in this matter. It was asked to treat all property, including Government property, on an equality and not to deal unjustly or ungenerously with the State, but justly if not generously with those localities which had to maintain their poor—maintain the public health, and fulfil municipal duty in both town and country, for the safety and welfare both of the locality and the general community. He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) felt that the only really satisfactory solution of this matter would be to alter the law which exempted Government property, and, therefore, he had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment; and he might say that in this matter he spoke with the support and sympathy of those London Members with whom he usually acted. He desired to make it clear at the outset that this was not a question between the Metropolis on the one hand, and the rest of the country on the other. On previous occasions when the question had been discussed, some hon. Gentlemen, who seemed to be terribly jealous of the Metropolis, desired to present the question in that light, and to make out that the Metropolis derived great advantages from its close relations with the Imperial Government. As a matter of fact, the case was directly the reverse, as the supporters of the Amendment would be perfectly prepared to show, in connection with a Motion which stood lower down on the Paper, if they got the opportunity. He might just mention, however, that in the Report on local taxation which was issued by the right hon. Gentleman who was now Secretary of State for India, it was stated that the additional grant in aid of local taxation given in 1888 and 1890, worked out, as between London and the county boroughs, with this result—that, so far as the county boroughs were concerned the contribution was equivalent to 6d. in the £ of rateable value, whereas in London it was something less than 4½d. So much, then, for what they heard as to the advantages which London now enjoyed under the existing arrangement. If it was argued that London derived some advantage from the fact that it was the seat of Government, he would point out that that very fact imposed upon London an additional burden, and he was disposed to think that, so far as the ratepayers were concerned, the losses more than counterbalanced the gain. This question concerned every parish in which Government property existed. It had been said that the presence of Government property in a parish was an advantage, but it was not so if large works existed, for undoubtedly they attracted a very considerable residuum of poor people. In Woolwich, he believed, one-third of the total area of the parish was occupied by Government property, and the expenditure on poor relief in that parish was one of the highest in the Metropolis. But, for argument's sake, he would admit that there was an advantage in the presence of Government property; but he would point out that it often happened that whilst the loss fell on one set of persons the gain accrued to another set. He would assume, for the sake of argument, that the presence of Government property in a district was an advantage. Even so, the persons who profited were not the same persons who bore the burden. The rating area was a small area, whereas the benefit would be spread over a much larger district. Thus the neighbouring parishes shared in the advantages, but they did not share in the loss to the rates arising from the inadequate assessment of the Government property. He submitted that this constituted a burden which pressed hardly on the comparatively small body of ratepayers in the particular parish in which the Government property happened to be situated. On the last occasion that the question was discussed there was some suggestion that they were endeavouring to raise a large Constitutional question; but they were really not doing so. The question raised was connected with a well-known ruling that the Crown was not bound by an Act of Parliament unless it was named therein. As a matter of fact, Government property had been made assessable, but subject to a restriction. The Post Office Sites Act of 1867 provided that land acquired by the Postmaster General under the Act should be assessable and rateable in respect of local rates. True, it was added that the rates should not exceed the amount chargeable at the time of acquisition; and that was a very important restriction. His point was, that here, at all events, they had, as far as the grave constitutional view was concerned, a precedent for making Government property assessable, without it being felt that they were raising a grave constitutional question, namely, that of the legal liability of the Crown in general. On the Paper there was an Amendment in the name of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), which proposed to enlarge the issue they had before them.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Although the Amendment stands on the Paper it will not be in order; it is quite foreign to the subject matter of the motion.

Mr. E. H. PICKERSGILL was glad to hear that was so, because, whilst he personally sympathised with the hon. Member, it seemed to him that it would have been disadvantageously inconvenient that the two questions should be discussed together. The present question, he maintained, occupied an entirely exceptional position. They started with the Parliamentary engagement of 1874, to which his hon. Friend had alluded. They could not go behind that engagement, and he should think that any arguments which did not take that Parliamentary engagement as the *terminus a quo*, was now irrelevant. In bringing forward this Amendment they took their stand distinctly upon the Parliamentary engagement of 1874, which declared that property in the occupation of the Government should bear its due share of local burdens. Therefore, the question they now had to consider was purely a practical question, namely, how effect might best be given to that engagement so solemnly given to Parliament. It was agreed that the present arrangements were not satisfactory. The Government valuer occupied an invidious position; and, although he might display ability and diplomatic skill, the results were not just to the persons who were most immediately concerned. Having gone thus far they were bound to go farther; and satisfaction would never be given until the Government were placed in the position of the general body of ratepayers. For these reasons he had great pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

*Colonel HUGHES (Woolwich) said, he was old enough to remember the time when Government property did not make any contribution whatever to local rates. Thirty-six years ago he was secretary to a movement which sprung up in towns containing Government property, and the result of it was that in a year or two contributions were made. They were glad to get them as an acknowledgment of the principle, previously denied, that Government property ought to bear its fair share of local taxation. Since that time Government had not acted quite up to the principle they enunciated, because they had taken the valuation of their own property into their own hands, and they had not allowed an appeal to any other authority. That was the point involved in the Amendment before the House. In Woolwich there was Government property of the annual value of £65,000, but this was the valuation of 1860 with certain additions made since. He inferred, from a recent correspondence, that the Government promised a new expert valuation this year. Thirty-five years had thus elapsed without proper re-valuation, while all other property in London was re-valued every five years. Government property ought also to be re-valued every five years; and it would be better if the Government would allow their property to be put in the rate book, because they could protect themselves from injustice through the Courts of Law quite as easily as any other ratepayer. It was as well to look at the matter from the Government point of view, and see how they arrived at the conclusion to resist the appeal now made to them. Whilst giving the Government credit for having, by the Treasury Minute of 1874, admitted the principle that justice ought to be done, he was bound to admit that some Government property was very difficult to value. You could not easily determine, as to an earthwork or a bomb proof building which had cost thousands, what would be its annual value from year to year to an ordinary tenant. Overseers were very glad to have the assistance of Treasury valuers in these difficult matters, and they were willing to adopt figures that were just, rather than to fight about the value of this extraordinary property. With regard to manufacturing premises and the private residences of officials, there was no such difficulty, and overseers could easily find persons competent to value them. A letter from the Treasury, dated last month, contained this passage:—

> "In these circumstances, and in view of the time which has passed since the last complete valuation of the Arsenal, their Lordships think that it would be satisfactory to the several interests concerned that a new valuation should now be again undertaken. The statutory conditions under which the Arsenal is held do not, in their opinion, permit of the building being simply included in the valuation lists in the same manner as though it were private property; but they are prepared, if such measure meets your wishes, to give directions for the entire re-valuation of the Arsenal by the officer at the head of the Treasury Department of Rates, whose ability and experience in such matters are well known to the Committee. They would propose to associate with Mr. Griffiths, an outside surveyor, whose name and position in the profession will be a guarantee that all the interests concerned will receive equal consideration in fixing the amount of the valuation."

He looked upon that as a considerable concession. If the Government would do this every five years with regard to all their property, discontent would vanish; but so long as they maintained their present position, they ought to allow an appeal against Government valuations. If the Government reserved the valuation in its hands, assisted by the local authorities to fix it, and would say that where the local authority were discontented with the inadequacy of the amount offered, they would exercise their power, and grant an appeal, this perhaps would be a better way, from the Government point of view, to meet the discontent than by accepting the Amendment and throwing all the Government property into the rateable area, which might involve a large number of appeals on the part of the Government on account of the difficulty of the overseers getting sufficient expert knowledge to assess the property and to fixing the proper valuation. He suggested, therefore, that if in the case of Woolwich the valuation should, in a few months, prove to be £10,000 less than it ought to be, the Government should allow the local authority to have the right of appeal rather than that the Government should stand on their strict legal rights. There was no alternative but to ask the Government to be placed in the same position as any ratepayer, and to give an opportunity to both sides to be heard, so as to settle the dispute with justice to everyone concerned.

MR. H. E. KEARLEY (Devonport) said, that his constituency was naturally interested in this question, because the Government buildings there covered a large amount of ground. The Crown land in his constituency was alone worth £600,000, and the buildings £1,500,000; and as his constituency had a direct interest in the proposition of the hon. Member he supported it. It was obvious that those large Government establishments were of considerable advantage to the town. Practically they made the town, though at the same time they threw upon the local authorities a great deal of cost. The mere wear and tear of those places where the Government were continually taking heavy weights into the manufactories was of itself an additional charge which would not be incurred in an ordinary town of similar size. He had heard it contended on the part of the Government that they treated the local authorities very liberally in regard to their contribution. That was not the feeling of the local authorities. On the contrary, they felt, at all events in his own constituency, that were the contribution doubled, it would be less than what ought really to be paid. In Devonport they were especially unfortunate in their system of land tenure, and in other respects they were unfortunate because of the defaulting on the part of the Government in paying a proper contribution to local rates. In addition to that there were some bridges drawing a very large revenue which were exempted from local taxation. The desire all over the country was simply for equality of treatment. They failed to see why on account of antiquated provisions in an Act of Parliament under which exemptions were given to the Crown by accident, while the local burdens were increasing, the Government should have any preferential treatment whatever. If the hon. Member for South Islington pressed his Motion to a Division, if the Government did not see its way to accede to it, he hoped the majority of the House would support it. Their desire was to apply the sound principle of what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander.

*Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) desired to support this Motion, and to endeavour to assist his hon. Friend who had brought it forward in placing the claims of the ratepayers to a full and equitable assessment of Government property in as clear a light as he could do from opportunities which he enjoyed as representing Westminster, the most glaring instance of the case that they were putting forward. He trusted the Motion would not be met by any jealous disposition on the part of Members representing the rest of the country. There were other patent financial grievances which London suffered from, such as its contribution to the poor rate and the police rate, which fell under the Motion on the Paper of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London. With regard to these and particularly with regard to the grievance under notice, he would remind hon. Members that, whatever relief was granted to London ratepayers, to such relief the inhabitants of London would contribute even more than their proportionate share. Such relief, of course, would be paid out of the Consolidated Fund—that was out of Imperial Taxation. Now, out of the sum raised under those heads of Imperial Taxation which it was possible to localise, and which amounted to £40,663,269, London contributed £9,736,206, or 23·94 per cent.; that was to say, London, with one seventh of the population of the whole country contributed practically one-fourth of this portion of Imperial Taxation; and this particular item of rates on Government property, this additional cost of housing the National Government, would still be contributed to by London in a larger proportion than by the rest of the country. How had the exemption enjoyed by property occupied by the Crown for the public service arisen? It had arisen from the application of the legal rule, upon which all rating was based, that there should be an occupier having a beneficial occupation. Where property belonging to the Crown was in the possession of an occupier having a beneficial occupation, the exemption did not apply; hence the tenants of Crown lands (such as Hyde Park, the grazing of which was let), were rateable like tenants of land belonging to private owners. The rangers of the royal parks were rateable for their residences, and it had even been held that the inmates of Hampton Court Palace were subject to the rate, notwithstanding the precarious nature of their tenure. In the case of Kensington Palace, an arrangement was made between the Crown and the local authority by which an annual contribution of £450 was made in lieu of rates. Government property held for public purposes was exempted, on the theory of non-beneficial occupation. But the theory had been long since abandoned, and the principle that all Government property should be rated had been clearly laid down. This was conceded in express terms in the Treasury Minute of 1874, which his hon. Friend had read. But long before that, so far back as 1858, a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to go into the subject, and this Committee reported that—

> "all lands and buildings used and occupied for public purposes, *whether there be a beneficial occupation or not, according to the received meaning of that term*, should be assessed to the local rates, and pay rates accordingly."

This Report, therefore, in express terms, threw over the theory of beneficial occupation. But the Minute of 1874, while it laid down the principle that Government property should be rated, contained, in the method of application suggested for that principle, a serious blot, and one which had ever since prevented, and now prevented, the principle being fairly carried out. While it stated the intention of adopting in each case, as far as possible, "the same principles as are applicable to the valuation of private property," it declared that the Government should retain in its own hands the valuation of all Government property. That was the key of the situation. The principles applicable to the valuation of private property were to be applied, by a method essentially foreign to, and incompatible with, the valuation of private property, namely, that the occupier was himself to assess the property he occupied for rating purposes. What would become of the rates if such a principle were admitted? What had become of the contribution to the rates fairly due from the Government on the property it occupied, by the operation of this anomalous and unprecedented condition? He admitted that fairer valuations were now being made, but these were not due to the initiative of the Treasury, but to the fact that the Vestry of the constituency he had the honour to represent, took up the matter in a vigorous and resolute manner, and, inviting the co-operation of other rating authorities of London, pressed for a re-valuation of these properties. The result of that pressure had been an increase in the assessment of Government property in Westminster of £34,423, and in the Strand Union, of £35,677. These two areas contained only about one-fourth of the Government property in London, and, assuming the same proportion in the other districts, the total increase would be £280,000, which, at 6s. in the £, would give an increase of £84,000 a-year in aid of London rates. He called the special attention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir John Hibbert) to this estimate, because, somewhat earlier in the Session, he was asked a question as to a statement in a pamphlet written by Mr. Hayter, a gentleman who was becoming a recognised authority on these matters, to the effect that the undervaluation of Government property in London meant a loss to the rates of £87,000. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he could not accept the estimate of £87,000 arrived at by Mr. Hayter, but it would be seen that on the basis arrived at of the increase in Westminster and the Strand, those figures were, as nearly as possible, accurate. He admitted that the right hon. Gentleman was disposed to consider this subject in a kindly and sympathetic spirit, but the natural inclinations of the right hon. Gentleman were, he thought, warped and cramped by the demoralising influence of the Department with which he was connected. The right hon. Gentleman sheltered himself under his statement in Committee, on March 28th, which was, no doubt, furnished to him by his officials, that Westminster and the Stand were perfectly satisfied. He would have something to say about the satisfaction of Westminster later on. He believed that his hon. Friend the Member for the Strand Division (Mr. W. F. D. Smith) had denied that the Strand authorities were satisfied. [Mr. W. F. D. SMITH—"Hear, hear."] He made no apology to the House for introducing local considerations into this discussion, because the whole Bill was a local one, and the amount of relief to be obtained in this matter rested upon the aggregate of justice or injustice done in certain localities. Dealing with Westminster, which had afforded the most glaring instance in support of the present Motion, he might state, without going into details, that the value of 32 Government properties in that district, *i.e.*, the value fixed for rating purposes by the Government itself, and for which alone the contribution had for many years been made in aid of the rates, was £43,632. It was proposed by the Vestry, on fair principles of valuation, that the amount should be increased to £88,122. The actual increase which the Government had allowed amounted to £34,423, or over £10,000 short of the estimated fair rateable value. But in addition, this increase of valuation left entirely out of account an element of great importance to Westminster, and one for which he asked a generous consideration by the House. This Palace of Westminster in which we sit was left by the Treasury as the most conspicuous instance in all London of under-valuation, because it was assessed only in respect of the Speaker's residence and the rooms occupied by other officials and servants of the House. This rateable value was fixed at £7,392. But if the whole Palace were valued, as it should be, a fair estimate would be an increase in the assessment of £45,000, which would give another 3d. in the £ in aid of the rates. The Treasury made exception to rating the Palace of Westminster as a whole, because it was, they said, a Royal Palace, but, he would ask, was there ever a contention thinner or more untenable? Buckingham Palace, Balmoral Castle, and Osborne were residences of the Sovereign; but in no sense could this be classed as such, inasmuch as it was not a personal residence of the Sovereign, nor was it adapted to, or used for, any such purpose. It was just as much occupied for the public service as the Foreign Office, the Admiralty, and the other buildings upon which the Treasury had allowed an increase in the assessment. Parliament, which governed the country, was, in fact, the beneficial occupier of this Palace of Westminster, and he could not imagine that Parliament, because it happened to meet in Westminster, would consent much longer to deprive the ratepayers of Westminster of what he claimed as their just and equitable due—namely, a fair rate on the buildings occupied by Parliament. Under these circumstances he could assure the right hon. Gentleman and the House that the Westminster local authorities were very far from being satisfied with the increase of assessments which had been made, and which, with the exception indicated, left altogether out of account this great dwelling-house of the representatives of the nation. But the right hon. Gentleman, in asserting that Westminster was "satisfied," had said, "I have it in black and white." He (the Speaker) also had something in black and white which he would venture to read to the House. It was a statement made to him by a member of one of the Westminster deputations which attended at the Treasury. He could assure the House that it was reliable and accurate, and he himself vouched for it:—

> "In all we waited upon the Surveyor to the Treasury three times. We had asked to be allowed to state our views on the under-valuation of Government property to him, but we no sooner interviewed the Surveyor than we found the proceeding was to be reversed, and he was to lay his views before us. He lectured us in a high-handed fashion for publishing and circulating among other rating authorities a statement of the under-valuation of Government property within the area of our jurisdiction; he stated we had made uncalled-for reflections upon him; and declared that our proceeding had given Her Majesty's Treasury deep pain. We tried hard to assure him that we had no intention of reflecting upon him, and denied that anything in the report we published was capable of bearing that interpretation; if so, we apologised sincerely. The alleged reflections, however, were flung at us repeatedly on all three

> occasions. After the second interview, which we thought had closed our business with the Treasury, the Surveyor wrote to say that he proposed to deduct one-fourth of the gross values of the barracks instead of the usual proportion of one-sixth to arrive at the rateable, because this was the practice in the case of lunatic asylums. We therefore waited upon him again when he abandoned this proposition. At the close of the interview he read out a long document, couched in most effusive terms, which he had prepared. It stated that we were satisfied that the values conceded were fair, and that we appreciated the handsome manner in which we had been treated by the Treasury. Some of us demurred to subscribing to the fairness of the values. We suggested a qualification such as 'fair under the circumstances.' Mr. Vincent Griffiths told us, however, that unless we were able to agree that the values conceded were fair, it would be perfectly useless for him to try to get the Chancellor of the Exchequer to confirm the new valuations. Taking up the document containing the values, he said it might as well be torn up if we could not agree that the values were fair. Faced with the loss of an additional £35,000 to the rateable value of the parish, which we had after much trouble obtained, we signed the effusive document. I am entitled to speak only for myself, but I may say I signed it, not because I thought the values conceded were adequate, but because I was anxious not to risk the loss of the £10,000 per annum to the parish which it will now receive over and above the former Treasury contributions in lieu of rates. My signature at last was obtained by the pressure involved in the threat of that loss."

The position would be easily understood. They were forced into signing the document prepared in the Treasury by having the threat held over their heads that if they did not sign it they would get no relief at all. They were one party to the suit, the other party were the judge. They were suppliants, and, naturally, they grasped at the crumbs thrown to them. But there, in the House of Commons, which was not the suppliant, but the Master of Departments, he asked, was that the way in which a great Department should deal with such a question? was that the sort of satisfaction—that "black and white" document—obtained under such circumstances, on which the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to rely as an answer to the further just claims he was urging? He begged leave to return for a moment to the general question. The local rating authority was the unit, the collective individual, of the financial system. Was it just to mulct one of these individuals out of proportion to the rest for the relief of the whole? By the operation of the law, or rather of the absence of a law, Government property was not legally rateable. This fell with a heavy hand upon certain of these individuals; and they were thereby, owing to the accident of containing within their area Government property, compelled to make a contribution to the Consolidated Fund, the fund that maintained the nation, entirely out of proportion to the rest of the individuals. Was this just? Was it not an inequality and an abuse which that House should be ready to level up and to remove—that House which was the last Court of Appeal against all injustice, if not for individuals, at least with regard to systems which affected individuals, however few and scattered the latter might be. But hon. Gentlemen might say this would need a Bill; and some sacred and hidden constitutional principle might be violated or tampered with in such a Bill. He wished that hon. Gentlemen on all sides of the House would be content to confine their tampering with the Constitution within these harmless limits. They would then have more of the time of the House to devote to the rectification of old irregularities that had escaped notice, and to the curing of new but irritating complaints that must from time to time arise in the most vigorous and perfect organisms. He thought a change in the law would be more satisfactory; but it was not essential to the remedying of this glaring injustice. The real remedy was for the Government to wipe out the blot in the Treasury Minute of 1874 and to allow their property to be assessed in accordance with the whole spirit of that Minute and of the Report of the Comission of 1858 by the same authorities and under the same conditions as those which applied to the property of the rest of the ratepayers all over the country. As to "tampering with the Constitution," all he could say was that he wished all tampering with the Constitution was confined within such harmless limits, because then more time in that House could be devoted to the removal of old irregularities which had escaped notice and caused irritating complaints—complaints which must, from time to time, arise in the most vigorous and perfect organism. There was no need of an Act of Parliament to remedy this great injustice. It could be done easily if the

Government would honestly and fearlessly remove the blot in the Treasury Minute of 1874, and consent to have this property in their occupation assessed by the same authority and under the same conditions as the property of the rest of the ratepayers was assessed.

*MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand) thought that the constituency which he had the honour to represent might be classed with the constituency of his hon, Friend who had just sat down. No district had stronger claims than the Strand in this matter. The amount of property assessed was nearly £100,000 net. There were two points to which he wished to draw attention, and these were with reference to the Courts of Justice and Somerset House. He was perfectly aware that, as to the Courts of Justice, there was a particular local difficulty in the way. In the Liberty of the Rolls the Government paid on the site of the Courts of Justice £2,194 net, the amount being estimated at £13,800. He need not here point out the great loss of rating which the district had to bear. In the parish of St. Clement Danes the Government paid an £10,377 net, the amount being estimated at £57,017. Then, as to Somerset House, in St. Mary-le-Strand, the surveyor of the parish's estimate was £28,860, that of the Government £20,000 only. If the property adjacent was of a different character he could understand this, but Somerset House was surrounded by offices of enormous value—property of practically the same quality as Somerset House, and of the same description. He could not see where the difficulty could lie with the Government surveyor, or why he could not come to a satisfactory settlement with the local valuer. It came to this, that in the Strand Union alone, the difference between the surveyors was something like £10,000, and this figure would have been increased if the Strand Surveyor had taken into account the unfinished Admiralty buildings. He need not go farther as to the Treasury Memorandum of 1874. The very same promises which had been made this year by the Government had been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1874. He rose only to call attention to some facts connected with his own constituency, and to show the very great hardship which was inflicted by the action of the Treasury in conjunction with the Equalisation of Rates Act passed last Session. It had been said that Government offices were of benefit to the districts in which they were placed. As matters stood, so far as the Strand was concerned, it was very much the reverse. These large buildings decreased, to a large extent, the night population of the district, and the rates were, therefore, owing to the action of the Equalisation of Rates Act, considerably above the average. Apparently, the Government allowed that their property should be rated on the same basis as private property. ["No, no!"] He hoped they would before the discussion concluded. He hoped that there would be a clear statement to that effect, and, further, that Government property would stand the same chance of being raised as the rates on private property were raised.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Mid Lanark) said, the other great towns did not possess the great Government buildings which London possessed, and which led to a great outflow of money. This was a question which could not be met by Resolution—it was far too important a matter to be decided in that way. They must proceed by Bill. Was there no Government property? No betterment in Westminster and Buckingham Palaces? If these buildings involved a loss they would expect to find the rates higher in Westminster than in other parts of London. [AN HON. MEMBER: "So they are."] He doubted that. In Westminster they reaped the advantage of land being more valuable in consequence of these buildings. Then they had St. James's Park and Hyde Park made for them and kept up without cost to the public. If great cities like Glasgow and Liverpool wanted a park they had to pay for it. There was the British Museum; did not the people of London get the benefit of having that Institution at their very doors? If the rating of Government property was to be considered, on the one hand, they should, on the other consider the benefits of the property to London on the betterment principle. If they were going to ask for more rates on account of the Government property, he did not see why the ratepayers of the United Kingdom should not propose that a considerable portion of Hyde Park and the Green Park should be leased for building purposes. In every one of the divisions of London in which Government property was situated there was a large amount of comparatively unrated property, but the existence of those buildings was a great advantage in many ways to the districts in which they were. What would be the effect, for instance, if St. James's Park and the ground on which Westminster Palace stood were leased for building purposes? Why, that the property of the neighbourhood would be greatly reduced in value. It was scarcely fair, therefore, that the rest of the community which had not the advantages to be derived from the presence of Government buildings in their midst, should be called upon to pay the increased rating proposed in this Motion.

*Mr. W. P. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) said, the Debate had failed to convince him that the case of those who introduced and supported the Motion was a just one. There was another side to the question than that which had been presented. The Motion had been introduced and seconded by London Members, who were supported by the hon. Member for Woolwich, the hon. Member for Devonport, the hon. Member for Westminster, and the hon. Member for the Strand Division, in all of whose constituencies Government works or buildings were situated. So that if he had had no views at all on the question he should have been inclined to suspect, in these circumstances, that the Motion covered an effort on the part of a section of the community to obtain an advantage at the expense of the community as a whole. Much had been said about the right of a parish to claim the full rates which should accrue from Government buildings situated in it, and about the extent to which such parishes were now deprived of a fair source of local revenue. But not a word had been said about those who were to pay the increased rates which were claimed for those buildings in London, Woolwich, Devonport, and other places. The whole of the Debate seemed to have proceeded on the assumption that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had a treasure-house filled with gold, out of which he could easily grant the increased rates claimed on the public buildings. But every one seemed to have forgotten that the rates would have to be paid by the general community—or by that great part of the community which did not enjoy the benefits of the presence of Government buildings—including the small cotters of the Highlands of Scotland and the poor peasantry of Ireland, of whose distressed condition they heard so much in the House on the previous night. An hon. Member had stated that this was not a London question as against the provinces. That might be true in the letter, but it was not true in the spirit. It was a question of London and the other places in which there was Government property against the rest of the country in which there was no such property. But what would London be if it were not the seat of Government? What would Westminster be without the Houses of Parliament, or if Parliament was removed, say to Oxford, where it was once held? Why, it was obvious that the value of its property, that its rents, its trade, and its prosperity generally would be greatly reduced. The same argument might be applied to all other places in which Government buildings were situated. Devonport would be a desert and a swamp but for the dockyard there. There was no place in the kingdom now without Government property which would not gladly welcome any of the great national buildings referred to, even without the power of rating them, because it was well known that the presence of such establishments increased local trade and raised the value of local property. London enjoyed those advantages to a large degree, and might well be content. The provinces to a very large extent regarded London as a pampered child of fortune. When, therefore, he heard the representatives of London crying out for more money from the public funds—from the pockets of the people of other parts of the kingdom, his suspicion was aroused. He should Vote against the Motion.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that as one of the pampered children of fortune representing London, he wished to say a few words in reply to the reply to the remarks of the last two speakers. It appeared to him that they had not regarded the question from a fair point of view. What was the claim made? Simply that those buildings which were used for national purposes should be rated in exactly the same way as other property. It was neither reasonable nor fair that a particular parish or town should suffer simply because Government buildings, used for the public benefit, happened to be situated in it. In some cases the existence of such buildings in a district might be an advantage, but not in all. Somerset House, for instance, did not in any way add to the prosperity of the Strand. The only fair way to pay rates and taxes in those districts was, that they should be paid out of the public Exchequer and the burden thrown upon those people who used them. The Motion did not apply to London only, but to an immense number of places besides. The hon. Gentleman opposite said that they had great advantages in the parks, but the parks had nothing to do with the question; there were two or three royal parks, but they paid for Battersea Park, Victoria Park, Hampstead Heath, and other parks because they were public places of general use. The question of building over these places was of course quite out of the question. What they had urged for years was, that there should be no special valuer for the Government property as there was at present. The appointment was a costly one, and was an absolute mistake. The valuation of these properties ought to be strictly on the lines of the valuation of other properties subject to the appeal to which other properties were subject. Technical difficulties might be got over by an Act of Parliament. They had come to the conclusion that the fair system was the one proposed, and they were encouraged in that view by the action of the Secretary to the Treasury. It was obvious that a system by which all these properties should pay no rates could not be maintained; the right hon. Gentleman had given way to a great extent, but he had not given way to the satisfaction of the localities. The localities would never be satisfied until the system was uniform. The right hon. Gentleman, by going as far as he had done, had, practically, cut the ground from under himself, and the next step must be that these properties should be assessed as other properties were.

Mr. HARRY LAWSON (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, the issue was an eminently practical one, and it was impossible to contend that it was one that concerned only the Metropolis. The figures showed that out of a total of £190,000 given in respect of Government buildings London received £80,000, leaving £110,000 to the rest of the country, and therefore the greater part of the money went to districts and municipalities outside London. Besides that there was not a town which had not its post office and surveyor of taxes' house, and in respect of those they would be sufferers and would benefit by the change. He would like, if possible, to be a peacemaker between the Secretary to the Treasury and the Metropolitan Members, and he would ask the hon. Member for Islington to omit the word "legislation" from the Motion. He believed in principle that the Motion might then find favour with the Secretary to the Treasury. They could not go further than the Treasury Minute of 1874. In the case of disagreement some fair tribunal of arbitration between the Government and the local authority would have to be decided upon. He believed it might be possible to come to some arrangement in regard to that, and if so, he hoped his hon. Friend would not insist upon his Motion verbatim, but would withdraw the words "by legislation," and then he did not think a Division would be challenged in the House.

Mr. G. C. T. BARTLEY said, they did not mind a Division.

Mr. HARRY LAWSON said, that what they wanted was to arrive at a fair conclusion to this controversy; it was not a question of one side scoring eff tho other, but of obtaining a proper contribution from the Government property in London and elsewhere. He suggested that the House should agreed to a Resolution admitting the liability of Government property, and leave it to those interested to settle with the Treasury what a proper tribunal should be to decide in case of disagreement between the Government and the local authority.

Mr. T. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, the basis of the argument was that the Government had no right to expect exceptional treatment. What they proposed was that the Government should submit themselves to the valuation of an ordinary local valuer. The Government. when it suited them, were only too ready to accept that valuation. They taxed him on the valuation of the local valuer, and, when he appealed, they referred him back to that valuation.

MR. HARRY LAWSON: You have the right to appeal.

MR. T. GIBSON BOWLES said, he was quite prepared that the Crown should have the right to appeal also. He expected equal treatment. The whole country got the benefit of the Government buildings, and was the Government not to pay also a proportionate part to the salary of some of the Ministers because most of that salary was not spent in Scotland? Then it must be remembered that the Government entered into serious competition with the business of small banks by their system of Post Office Savings Banks, and was it not monstrous that, under those circumstances, the Government should not pay the ordinary rates, as the banker did? Where the Government found it necessary to occupy buildings, those buildings should be subject to the ordinary charges, and should no longer be entitled to claim exemption. In a parish consisting chiefly of Government buildings, such as a fort or a dockyard, if those buildings were to be exempt from rates, a few houses held by private individuals might have to pay the whole of the rates. In his opinion the true principle that should be acted upon was that the Government should have no right of exemption at all. On the whole he should vote for the Resolution without hesitation.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire) said, that he should oppose the Resolution. It might not be admitted that on this particular question he could claim that his foot was upon his native heath, but as a Scotchman he thought he had a right to protest against this proposal. It had been stated that Westminster had been relieved to the tune of £34,000 a year, but as far as the rest of the country was concerned it was a question of taking out of one pocket and putting into the other. He did not oppose the Resolution from a feeling of jealousy, but he merely asked for what was just and right as between the different parts of the country. As a Scotch representative he wished to point out that if London was to be relieved by the full rating of Government buildings the rest of the country would necessarily have to make up for it.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir JOHN HIBBERT, Oldham), in answer to the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, said that he need not be afraid of the Government giving way on this subject. At the same time he wished to see justice done to the ratepayers, to the taxpayers, and to the Exchequer. While he could not approve of the Resolution, he must say that he could not find fault with anything that its Mover had said. There were, however, two sides to the question. This subject had been a source of difficulty ever since 1858, when a Committee, which was appointed to inquire into the question, recommended that all property, whether held privately or by the Government, should be liable to be rated. In 1859 when Lord Derby was Prime Minister, an attempt was made to carry out the recommendations of the Committee, but, although those recommendations were embodied in a Bill, it was found impossible to carry a measure on the subject that would be satisfactory to the country. In 1871, when the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was the President of the Local Government Board, he endeavoured to deal with the question, and brought in a Bill on the subject which was equally unsuccessful with the one that preceded it. In 1873 the right hon. Member for Halifax was President of the Local Government Board and attempted to deal with the subject, and brought in another Bill, which was unsuccessful. In 1874, when a Conservative Government were in office, Sir Stafford Northcote thought that the difficulty which the subject involved was so great that he did not attempt to bring in a Bill dealing with it, but merely made a proposal which took the form of the Treasury Minute which had been referred to by the Mover of the Resolution. Ever since 1874 the Government of the day, acting upon the terms of that Minute, had gone on making grants in aid of Government property on account of rates. At that time Sir Stafford Northcote prepared a memorandum on the subject for the purpose of laying it before the House of Commons, which put the question in the fairest way possible, and showed clearly that it was the intention of the Government of the day to make all Government property liable to rating. Nothing could be clearer than the terms of that memorandum, which enunciated the principle that Government property was liable to be rated, but reserved the question of the mode of valuation in the hands of the Government. The hon. and gallant Member for Woolwich, in a speech which he had made upon this question, had pointed out the difficulty of dealing with the subject by means of legislation in consequence of the impossibility of putting a fair value on such buildings as forts. Were forts to be rated on the basis of the amount of money that had been expended upon them? The forts around our dockyards had cost, roughly speaking, something like £20,000,000; and taking 3 per cent. on that amount as their annual value, the rates payable for them would be no less than £120,000 a year. A difficulty would be imposed on the Assessment Committees in dealing with such properties. It was said that the Houses of Parliament were not rated. All the official residences within the building were rated, but the houses themselves were not, and this was because they were supposed to be Royal palaces. [An hon. MEMBER: "Why?"] He could not say; but they had been so regarded from all time, and this was indisputable. That House of Parliament cost approximately £3,500,000, and this assessed at 3 per cent. would yield £26,250 a year for rates for that one property alone. Were they prepared to meet so great a charge? Representatives of London parishes might say they were willing to advance that large sum; but the Treasury had to think of the taxpayers of the country. Still, he admitted that many Government properties were not adequately rated. But he wished to show what had been done in London during the last few months. The re-valuation of property in London was going on rapidly, and he hoped the activity which was going on would bring forth good fruit. More than half of London had already been settled, and every case so settled was regarded by the Valuation and Assessment Authorities as fair, just, and satisfactory. Taking St. Margaret's, Westminster, the old gross annual value was £57,740; the new valuation was £97,079, an increase of £39,339. With regard to the Strand parishes, the increase in St. John the Baptist, Savoy, was from £1,440 to £3,000; in St. Mary-le-Strand the increase had been from £10,560 to £24,000. In St. Martin's in the Fields, which included the new Admiralty Buildings and the National Portrait Gallery, the increase had been from £32,415 to £51,182. In the Liberty of the Rolls, which included the new Record Office, there had been an increase from £6,240 to £15,799, or an increase of £9,559. In Marylebone there was an increase of £898, and in St. Andrew, Holborn, and St. George the Martyr of £1,967. In the parish of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster, the Vestry had written expressing their "unqualified agreement" with the new valuation. The Vestry of St. Andrew, Holborn, and of St. George the Martyr stated that they "consider the new valuation quite fair and reasonable." The Assessment Authorities of all the other parishes had expressed their full concurrence in the new valuation as a fair and satisfactory one. With respect to the rating of the Royal Courts of Justice he quite admitted that the Strand Union had a grievance. The Royal Courts of Justice were rated under an Act of Parliament limiting the assessment to the rateable value of the property at the date of its acquisition by the Crown, and he proposed to obtain powers to make the Courts of Law rateable just like any other Government property, and do away with the exemption that existed. Legal advice was being taken as to the course that should be adopted for this purpose. With respect to other Local Authorities, the Treasury were prepared to consider any representations that might be made to them as to grievnaces that existed. Many authorities had been satisfied with the valuations since 1874, and had never appealed to the Treasury to revise them. If they were to do so the Treasury would be willing to consider whether a case had been made out for an increase or otherwise. The Treasury desired to deal fairly and loyally with the Local Authorities according to the memorandum on the subject. Replying to what had been said by the hon. Member for Woolwich he did not know whether the Treasury could grant an appeal from the decision of the Treasury valuer. The present system was that the valuer made a report to the Treasury, and the latter confirmed it or otherwise. It was difficult to say what appeal could be given, but he thought some kind of case had been made out for appeal between the Government valuer and the Local Authorities, and if it was possible to provide a satisfactory Court of Appeal, the Treasury would be prepared to do its best in that direction. The valuation of going concerns like Woolwich Arsenal was intricate and complicated, and the Treasury had decided to engage the services of an expert to assist the Treasury valuer in coming to a proper decision. He was inclined to think that would be satisfactory to the Assessment Committee of Woolwich Union. The expert would then go over the property, and the Union authorities might interview the Treasury if the Treasury valuation was not acceptable to them.

*COLONEL HUGHES said, that the Woolwich Union had appointed a valuer to go over some Government buildings, but his application to inspect them had been refused.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, that it was a matter that would have to be considered. At first sight it seemed that the local authority ought to have every information given to them.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) asked, whether it was distinctly understood that where the overseers were not satisfied they might appeal to theTreasury?

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT said, that they already had the power of appeal. He was hoping to set up a better form of appeal. There were one or two other concessions which the Government were prepared to make. In addition to the Courts of Law, the General Post Office and the Customs House would be dealt with in the same way. He might ask the hon. Gentleman, who brought forward this Motion—he would not say not to press it—but to acknowledge that some progress had been made upon this question, in dealing with which it was possible to be in too great a hurry. Let them wait for this year's quinquennial valuation, and let them see whether any great grievance existed throughout the country on the same question. Then, if they were not satisfied with the bold way in which the matter had been treated by the Treasury, further action could be taken. It would be scarcely wise to take so great a step as the Motion suggested at the present time. He had confidence that the Government valuer, Mr. Griffiths, would deal with these questions so as to give satisfaction not only to the local authorities, but also to the Treasury. It might be desirable in the future that these questions of Government valuation should be liable to revision at each quinquennial valuation in the Metropolis, and from time to time in the country, when the valuations of the different unions were reconsidered. Having made this statement and being desirous, as far as he could bring any influence to bear on the question, to see the spirit of the 1874 Memorandum loyally carried out, he hoped that the House would support the present system.

MR. W. R. BOUSFIELD (Hackney, N.) said, that the supporters of the Motion ought to be grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the concessions which he had offered. But the right hon. Gentleman had not entirely grasped the object of the Motion; and he hoped that, if a trifling alteration were made in its wording, the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to assent to it. It was suggested that the words "by legislation" should be left out, and the hon. Mover was willing to accept that Amendment. Everything in the Motion would then be consistent with what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, and would strengthen his hands in taking the action which he was willing to take. The right hon. Gentleman had fully affirmed the principle of the 1874 Memorandum, which set out the identical principle affirmed by the Motion. And why was the House asked to reaffirm that principle? Because it was admitted that the principle had not been consistently upheld by the Government, and that there were exemptions existing which were unjust. He suggested that the Government would be wise in accepting the Motion, as amended, and in so enabling the House to reaffirm a principle which had been challenged by some of the Government's supporters. Attempts had been made to reopen the whole question. It was said that the Government buildings were of great advantage to the localities in which they were situated; and that some sort of "betterment" was caused by them. After the admission of the right hon. Gentleman, it was not necessary to answer those arguments if they were serious.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): If I may explain —— [*Cries of* "Order!"]

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is entitled to make an explanation if the hon. Member who is speaking gives way to him.

Dr. MACGREGOR: We challenge the principle on this ground—that Government property is not the same as private property, and therefore that it ought not to be rated on the same principle.

Mr. BOUSFIELD said, that it was evident that some of the Government's supporters took a different view from the Government themselves. The same arguments would equally apply to a large employer, who had a big factory. He hoped that, in view of the action of their own supporters, the Government would assent to the Motion with the words "by legislation" left out.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, that he did not quite agree with his hon. Friend in whose name the Motion stood, nor with the hon. Gentleman opposite, who opposed the Motion on the ground that Government property should not be rated equally with other property. He failed to see why Government property should not bear its fair share of local expenditure. But he had listened to the Secretary to the Treasury with some surprise, because from what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the history of the Treasury in this matter, it appeared that the application of the existing system was extremely unequal throughout the Metropolis, and that in some instances the local authorities had been bested by the Treasury. Therefore he was not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman proposed certain concessions; but the suggested Amendment of the Motion would seem to carry the House further than the right hon. Gentleman's speech had indicated. He was compelled to approach this subject not altogether from the point of view of the London Members. The question was a very large one, and the London Members asked for a considerable advantage when they called upon the ratepayers and taxpayers of the rest of the country to make up the deficit which would result if this principle were to be applied to its fullest possible extent. The Secretary to the Treasury had made a valuable concession in intimating that he would endeavour to arrive at some process by which there should be an appeal in this matter, but the right hon. Gentleman did not say whether legislation would be required or not. He presumed that if the Treasury assented to an appeal there would be no need of legislation. He did not know what course the hon. Member for Islington would take in face of the concession, but it appeared to him that, having regard to the interests of the ratepayers not only of the Metropolis but of the rest of the country, the Resolution by itself would carry them a little too far. If the Resolution were to the effect that the House should proceed by legislation to deal with the whole question of the incidence of taxation, and the existing system of local valuation, he could see no objection to it; but London Members would not deny that if they got all they asked for there would be a deficit which would have to be made up by the taxpayers and ratepayers of the rest of the country. [Mr. Brunner: "Not ratepayers."] As a matter of fact, ratepayers and taxpayers were the same persons. He wished the House might be allowed to accept the assurance the Government had given that they would endeavour to remove the cause of injustice, and that they would not be called upon to pledge themselves to a matter which was not only open to practical difficulties, but to some charge of want of consideration towards the rest of the country.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, the Secretary to the Treasury had done a good deal in the course of the past year to meet what had been brought before him eighteen months ago. The London County Council brought this matter very prominently before the Treasury, and the deputation which waited upon the right hon. Gentleman reported to the Council that they found every desire on the part of the Treasury to carry out the Treasury minute; but for all that he could not accept as satisfactory the position taken up to day by the right hon. Gentleman. The presence in the Resolution of the words "by legislation" was in no sense essential. What was desired was that the thing should be done, and if it could be done, or largely done, without legislation, well and good. If, however, legislation were necessary, as it might be in certain cases, then legislation would have to be resorted to although that specific method was not included in the Resolution. He, therefore, thought the Resolution would be improved by the omission of the words "by legislation." He could not accept the view of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Long) that the Resolution went beyond the position taken up, at least theoretically, by the Government because what the Government said was that they stood by the Treasury Memorandum of 1874. The words of that Memorandum were—

> "We adopt the principle that property occupied for the public service should contribute to the local rates equally with other property in the parishes in which it is situated with due regard to its character in each case."

After those words had been adopted by a responsible Government, he did not feel it at all necessary to answer the points which had been raised by hon. Members who had spoken in opposition to the principle of rating Government property for local purposes. But the proposal made by the hon. Member for Islington was really to carry out effectively the Treasury Memorandum. While they realised fairly and honourably that the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured to meet what had been urged upon him, and what was particularly urged upon him by the London County Council, and that he had done much in the right direction, they maintained that the doing of justice should not rest upon the arbitrament of the right hon. Gentleman or of his department. They claimed that henceforth justice should be done in the ordinary course of law. If the right hon. Gentleman accepted the Resolution he would have his hands strengthened in effecting the object which it was quite evident he wished to effect. If the right hon. Gentleman found legislation was necessary, it would be his duty to bring it in, and the duty of hon. Members to support him in the matter. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would do what they asked of him, namely, give definiteness and distinctness to the principles enunciated in the House, both by himself and all who had supported the Motion, and he could not do that better than by supporting the Resolution.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) submitted that the Secretary to the Treasury had made a valuable concession. At the same time, as the hon. Member for Shoreditch had pointed out, it was only a voluntary concession. It was based upon no system, upon no definite principle. It might apply to one parish which brought pressure to bear on the Government Department, whilst another parish, which probably had not the same municipal courage as a richer one, would perhaps not succeed in getting that fair valuation and assessment of Government property that the rich parish had been able to secure. The fact was, the question ought to be treated on higher grounds than it had been treated by both London and Provincial Members. In every country this problem had confronted the Government that had their representative chambers in any town or city, and an imperial city could only be governed from one of two points of view. The one was that adopted by the United States in the case of Washington, and such a system we in this country would not stand for 24 hours, and the other was that suggested by the hon. Member for Islington, namely, to make Government buildings amenable, generally speaking, to the conditions that applied to all sorts of property, and which the Assessments Committees of local authorities generously took into consideration when they were assessing. Washington had no Municipal Government at all. None of the citizens had votes, and there were no local rates and taxes. The system was most unsatisfactory, and the people were continually clamouring against it. Under a different system the Government property would be assessed at a much higher value than the Government were disposed to value it at. The second method of treating this question was that which London demanded, namely, that every Government building should be assessed at its fair rateable value on uniform lines and conditions. Some provincial Members seemed to be under the impression that if London lost by the non-assessment of Government buildings, she gained by the wealth and business which followed the Imperial city. But there was another side to the Imperial city which those gentlemen forgot. It was true that the Imperial city attracted wealthy people, and certain forms of business, but it also attracted certain undesirable things which added to the burdens of ordinary London ratepayers. In London there were 60,000 tramps, and about 10,000 criminals, which could not possibly be due to the ordinary criminality or destitution of London itself. Therefore, the advantages of the Imperial city were counterbalanced by its disadvantages.

Dr. MACGREGOR: I would point out to the hon. Gentleman that the expenses of criminals come on the Imperial Revenue.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said, the hon. Gentleman forgot that there were many local charges, such as the cost of casual wards and other poor law expenses, which were attributable to the state of things he had mentioned. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had asked the London Members on what basis a fort or arsenal could be assessed. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that the Assessment Committees of the local authorities would not discriminate between the valuation of a fort and a public house? Of course they would. Indeed, if a uniform and equitable system of rating of Government buildings were established, he was afraid the Assessment Committees would err on the side of generosity in assessing Government buildings, because they would be influenced by the desire to retain those establishments in their districts. It was also said by provincial Members that there were certain parks in London maintained at the expense of the country. But if the Government gave them a just and uniform assessment of all Government property in London, the people of London would not be indisposed to take over and maintain all the Government parks and open spaces. What the Government had done was to hand over to the London County Council certain parks with all their liabilities for maintenance, but without many of the recoupment revenues which the Government got when they originally took over those parks. For instance, the Government handed over Battersea Park, on which they used to spend £10,000 a year, to the County Council. The same sum was now spent by the County Council on the park. But there was a piece of land round the park which the Government got with the park, and from which they derived £10,000 a year in ground rents —the amount they spent on the park— and this land they retained in their possession when they gave the park over to the County Council. Another argument of provincial Members was that the London police stations and police force were maintained out of the Imperial revenue. The London people were quite prepared to maintain the stations and the police when they got control of the force. The London County Council originally paid only £7,000 in rates for their buildings. But the local authorities rose up in arms against the system of assessment, and in six years the amount had jumped from £7,000 to £63,000. He did not see why Government buildings should not pay rates as well as County Council buildings, and he was sure that if, next Session, the hon. Member for Islington brought in a Bill on the lines of his Motion, it would receive the support of the bulk of the Members of that House.

Mr. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, some provincial Members seemed to think that the question of the assessment of Government buildings was purely a London question. They failed to take into consideration the important fact that while London paid one-fifth of the rating of the United Kingdom, it had only one-third of the Government property. Another feature of the question entirely lost sight of in the Debate was, the position of parishes in London that were not so favourably situated as Westminster or the Strand, there were large Government establishments that, probably, recouped the parishes for anything they lost in the way of rates. In Finsbury, for instance, there was a militia barracks, occupied, most of the year, by a staff, from which the parish derived no benefit of any kind, in lieu of the rates. There were, also, in the parish three drill halls of volunteers that did not belong to the parish, and not one penny of rates was paid by those buildings. In fact, Finsbury lost, rather than gained, by its Government establishments. He thought the time had come for doing away with those exemptions. He desired to give the Secretary to the Treasury all the credit for the work he was doing towards settling the question, and he thought the hands of the right hon. Gentleman would be materially strengthened if the Resolution were placed on record as the expression of the views of the House on the question.

MR. H. T. ANSTRUTHER (St Andrews Burghs) said, there were cases of authorities under the control of the Board of Trade being held justified in refusing to contribute to local rates because of certain statutory exemptions. The President of the Board of Trade would confirm him when he said that it was the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown that the Board of Trade had no alternative in the matter, and was not permitted under the statute to make any such exemptions as had been demanded by certain parishes in Scotland, and one especially in which he was interested. Therefore, as legislation would certainly be necessary in some such cases as were contemplated by the Motion of his hon. Friend, he should prefer it in that form. If the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to indicate that he would accept the Resolution in the amended form, it would go very far to mitigate his feelings in the matter, and to lead to that unanimity which they should all be glad to find.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he was willing to leave out of the Motion the word "legislation," his object being to reaffirm the principle on the line of the Treasury Minute, leaving it to the Government to determine how it should be carried out.

*SIR JOHN HIBBERT intimated that, even with the alteration suggested, he could not accept the Resolution, but should prefer to rely upon the principle expressed in the Memorandum of 1874.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 65; Noes 64.—(Division List No. 48.)

Main Question again proposed.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) said, he desired to call the attention of the House to the inadequate amount received by London under the present system from the Imperial Exchequer grants in aid of local expenditure, and to press for an inquiry into the system under which the grants were distributed, especially as regarded London. Their complaint fell under three main heads—namely, rates on Government property, the share of Exchequer contributions, and the contribution to police. As regarded the first point the House was aware that Government property was not rated. Government, however, had accepted the principal that a sum should be paid, fairly representing the rate. The London Members believed, however, and thought they should be able to satisfy a Committee that under this head London received £40,000 a year less than the sum to which she was justly entitled. The Exchequer contributions, to which he now passed, were apportioned according to the amount paid by Government in the year 1887-8 in respect of certain grants discontinued in that year by the Local Government Act, and this system was open to serious objections. In the first place the year 1887-8 was very unfortunate for London, inasmuch as they received less than 22 per cent., whereas for several previous years they had received over 23 per cent. In any case, however, he submitted that it was a very unsatisfactory plan to take the cost in one year of certain specified charges as permanent rates for the apportionment of rates in all future years and for all requirements. But, in the second place, these grants themselves were not based on any equitable system of division, as between county and county; in some of them, as for instance, those for roads, and for medical officers, London had scarcely any allotment. As regards the grant for main roads, out of a total of £500,000, London received £3,500 only; the fact that in the City they supported their own police at a cost of £50,000 a year, was left out of account altogether, and the consequence was that London received over £150,000 less than its fair amount.

*Mr. James Rowlands.*

[Notice taken that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present:—

House adjourned at a Quarter before
Eight o'clock till Monday next.

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TO

# THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION).

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## VOLUME XXXII. FOURTH SERIES.

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THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1895.

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### Explanation of Abbreviations.

Bills, Read $1^a$, $1^o$, $2^a$, $2^o$, $3^a$, $3^o$. Read the First, Second, or Third Time.
1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on First, Second, or Third Reading.
Adj. Adjourned.
*A.* Answer.
*c.* Commons.
Com. Committee.
com. Committed.
Intro. Introduction.
*l.* Lords.
Obs. Observations.
Pres. Presented.
*Q.* Question.
Rep. Reported.
R.P. Report Progress.
Reso. Resolutions.

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The Subjects of Debate, as far as possible, are classified under General Headings : *e.g.*,

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Customs, Excise, and Inland Revenue
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Biddulph, Mr. M., *Herefordshire, Ross*
- Land out of Cultivation *Mar* 28, 342

Bigwood, Mr. J., *Middlesex, Brentford*
- London Water Supply *April* 9, 1276

Bill, Mr. C., *Staffordshire, Leek*
- English Mails in Spain *April* 8, 1151
- Established Church (Wales) Bill *April* 1, 655

Billson, Mr. A , *Barnstaple*
- Kew Gardens, *Mar* 29, 465
- Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1093

Birrell, Mr. A., *Fife, W.*
- Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 639
- Speaker—Election of *April* 10, 1372
- Weighing of Cattle *April* 1, 580

*Births, Deaths, and Marriages—General Abstract of Year 1894*
- Pres. and Ordered to lie on Table *April* 1, 561

**Boards of Guardians (Ireland) (Constitution and Powers) Bill**
- *c.* Adjourned Debate on Motion for com. to Standing Com. on Law, further adjourned *April* 8, 1251

Bodkin, Mr. M. M., *Roscommon, N.*
- Finnigan (Patrick)—Case of *April* 8, 1133
- Medical Officer of Stokestown *April* 1, 596

Bolton, Mr. T. H., *St. Pancras, N.*
- Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1719
- Metropolitan Police (Receiver) Bill *April* 8, 1250
- Poor Law Electors) Amendment Bill *April* 3, 874
- Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1099
- Slaughter of Cattle—Compensation *Mar* 25, 42, 43
- Theatre Royal, Rugby *April* 2, 733
- Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill *April* 25, 1726, 1727
- Tramways (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1558

"*Bond Tea*" (see Home Department)

Bonsor, Mr. Cosmo, *Surrey, Wimbledon*
- Course of Public Business *April* 1, 608
- Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1171, 1181

Boscawen, Mr. A. S. T. Griffith-, *Kent, Tunbridge*
- Charity Commission *April* 23, 1520, 1521
- Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 869, 870
- Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 237, 241, 248, 257 ; *April* 1, 567
- Herz (Dr.) *April* 9, 1295

Boulnois, Mr. E., *Marylebone, E.*
- London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 892, 899
- Winding-up of Public Companies *April* 8, 1150 ; *April* 25, 1632, 1633

Bousfield, Mr. W. R., *Hackney, N.*
- Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1776, 1777

Bowles, Captain H. F., *Middlesex, Enfield*
- Enfield Ordnance Factory *Mar* 28, 325

Bowles, Mr. T. G., *Lynn Regis*
- Army Annual Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 135 ; *Mar* 28, 435, 436
- Balfour (Jabez Spencer) *Mar* 26, 170
- Belleville Boilers *April* 1, 589
- China and Japan *April* 23, 1500
- Commissioners of Inland Revenue *April* 9, 1294
- Dublin Garrison *Mar* 28, 346
- Fisheries Committees *April* 2, 721
- Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 704, 710
- Irish Lights Board Bill *Mar* 26, 172 ; 2R. *Mar* 27, 272, 279
- Matacong—Island of *April* 9, 1276
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1323, 1326 ; *April* 25, 1634
- "Parliamentary Debates" Contract *April* 1, 600
- Pilot and Distress Signals *April* 22, 1402
- Proposed Harbour Works at Dover *April* 1, 597
- Public Revenue Accounts *April* 4, 935, 936, 937
- Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1770, 1771
- Rule of the Road at Sea—Debate on Amendment to *Motion* for Select Com. *Mar* 25, 136
- Siam *Mar* 26, 173 ; *April* 23, 1493
- Supply
  - £4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 23, 364, 365, 376, 409
  - Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 513
- Winding-up of Public Companies *April* 25, 1632, 1633

Bright, Mr. J. Albert, *Birmingham, Central*
- Light Railways *April* 4, 940

Bright, Right Hon. Jacob, *Manchester, S.W.*
- Spirits Imported into British Possessions *April* 1, 579

BROADHURST, Mr. HENRY, *Leicester*
  Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1420, 1421, 1424
  Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1206, 1208

BRODRICK, Hon. W. ST. JOHN, *Surrey, Guildford*
  Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 796, 805

BROOKFIELD, Mr. A. M., *Sussex, Rye*
  Trade and Navigation Returns *April* 26, 1736

BRYCE, RIGHT HON. JAMES (President of the Board of Trade), *Aberdeen, S.*
  Accommodation for Seamen *April* 8, 1136
  Boiler Explosion at Govan *April* 2, 734
  Collapse of a Tunnel *April* 9, 1293
  Cowes Harbour *Mar* 25, 25
  Erbusaig Railway *Mar* 29, 473
  Established Church (Wales) Bill *April* 1, 612, 614, 630, 634, 639, 647
  Fire at Tuam *April* 8, 1153
  Fisheries Committees *April* 2, 720, 721
  Foreign Prison-made Goods *April* 4, 933, 934
  Government Bills *Mar* 28, 328
  Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 706, 708 ; *April* 5, 1023
  Great Western Railway Bill *April* 5, 1031
  Harbours of Refuge *April* 2, 720 ; *April* 9, 1265
  Irish Lights Board Bill *Mar* 26, 172 ; 2R. *Mar* 27, 279, 287, 290, 292, 293
  Kitchen Boiler Explosions *April* 25, 1632
  Light Railways Bill *April* 4, 940 ; *April* 25, 1700, 1710, 1715, 1716
  London and North Western Railway Bill *April* 25, 1610
  London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 898
  Measures in the Potteries *April* 25, 1627
  Midland Great Western Railway *Mar* 28, 351
  Notice of Accidents Act *Mar* 29, 471
  Ocean Derelicts *April* 23, 1489
  Parochial Charities *April* 2, 731
  Patents *April* 25, 1618, 1619
  Pilot and Distress Signals *April* 1, 588
  Profit-sharing *Mar* 27, 266, 267
  Railway Accident in Ireland *April* 1, 570
  Royal Canal Island *April* 4, 917
  Rule of the Road at Sea April 5, 1116
  Scotch Lighthouses *Mar* 29, 473
  Shipment of Sailors and Firemen at Foreign Ports *April* 8, 1135
  Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 837
  Supply
    £4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 365, 366, 367
    Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 520
  Through Railway Rates from Ireland *April* 4, 914
  Tramways (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1562
  Trawl Fishing and the Rule of the Road at Sea *April* 1, 579
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BRYCE, Right Hon. JAMES—*cont.*
  Weighing Seamen's Food *April* 8, 1137
  Welsh Emigrants *April* 25, 1628
  Winding-up of Public Companies *April* 8, 1150 ; *April* 25, 1632, 1633

BUCHANAN, Mr. T. R., *Aberdeenshire, E.*
  Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 9, 1366 ; *April* 23, 1503 ; 1R. *April* 25, 1665
  Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 278, 279
  Postal Facilities at Fintray, Aberdeenshire *April* 9, 1278
  Scotch
    Business *April* 9, 1368
    Parishes *April* 8, 1140

BUCKNILL, Mr. T. T., *Surrey, Epsom*
  Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 663
  Labourers' Allotments *April* 4, 917, 918

BURDETT-COUTTS, Mr. W. L. A. B., *Westminster*
  Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1757

**Burgh Land Tax (Scotland) Bill**
  *c.* Intro., Mr. J. B. Balfour ; Read 1° *April* 22, 1488

BURNIE, Mr. R. J. D., *Swansea Town*
  Assault on a Dock Labourer *Mar* 26, 177
  May Labour Demonstrations *Mar* 26, 179

BURNS, Mr. J., *Battersea*
  Aged Poor Commission *April* 25, 1611
  Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 25, 1698
  Indoor Paupers in the Metropolis *April* 1, 582
  London and North Western Railway Bill, 2R. *April* 25, 1609
  London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 904
  Patents *April* 25, 1619
  Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1779, 1781
  Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 832, 834
  Supply
    £4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 387
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BURT, MR. T. (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade), *Morpeth*
  Pilot and Distress Signals *April* 22, 1401, 1402
  Trade and Navigation Returns *April* 26, 1736

BUTCHER, Mr. J. G., *York*
  Telegraphists' Holidays *April* 8, 1149

BUXTON, Mr. SYDNEY (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Tower Hamlets, Poplar*
British Honduras *April* 9, 1263, 1264
Colonial Military Contribution *April* 1, 592
Duties on British Goods *April* 1, 571
Eastern Colonies Military Contribution *Mar* 28, 339
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Finance Act in the Colonies *April* 22, 1402
International Monetary Conference *April* 4, 916
Seal Fisheries *April* 9, 1268
Spirits Imported into British Possessions *April* 1, 579
Supply
  £4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 430, 434
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Swaziland *Mar* 26, 169, 170
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BYLES, Mr. W. P., *York, W. R., Shipley*
Cloth Factories *Mar* 26, 161
Distress from Want of Employment Committee *Mar* 26, 173, 174
Female Factory Inspectors *April* 4, 927
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1767
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CAINE, Mr. W. S., *Bradford, E.*
Dismissal of an Army Surgeon in Madras *April* 25, 1630
Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1221, 1222, 1223
Reports of Royal Commissions *April* 25, 1629
Schools and Colleges in India *April* 25, 1612

CALDWELL, Mr. J., *Mid Lanark*
Factories and Workshops Bill *April* 22, 1486
Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1681
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1766
Wages and Government Contracts *April* 1, 583
Workmen's Dwellings in Scotland *April* 26, 1737

CAMERON, Sir C., *Glasgow, College*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1596

CAMPBELL, Mr. J. A., *Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities*
Church of Scotland—The *Mar* 26, 161
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 220
Scotch Education Code *Mar* 29, 471; *April* 4, 1010

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Right Hon. HENRY (Secretary of State for War), *Stirling Burghs*
Adjutancy in the Yeomanry *April* 4, 924
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  Templemore *April* 23, 1499
  Wellington *Mar* 26, 177
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Cavalry Manœuvres in Berkshire *April* 8, 1147
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Dublin Garrison *Mar* 28, 346
Field Artillery Batteries *April* 23, 1499
Irish Soldiers and the Shamrock *April* 2, 713, 714; *April* 4, 909, 910; *April* 23, 1500, 1501, 1502
Kingcase Rifle Range, Ayrshire *Mar* 29, 467
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Ordnance Store Corps *April* 2, 726; *April* 25, 1620, 1621
Royal Artillery Bands *Mar* 28, 329
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  Artillery (1st Essex) *April* 8, 1156
  Camp Canteens *April* 23, 1494
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  Combined Drill *April* 26, 1730
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CANTERBURY, Archbishop of
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CARMARTHEN, Marquess of, *Lambeth, Brixton*
Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 283
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CARSON, Mr. E. H., *Dublin University*
Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 2, 738, 753, 759, 760

CAYZER, Mr. C. W., *Barrow-in-Furness.*
Government Bills *Mar* 28, 327
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CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. J. AUSTEN, *Worcestershire, E.*
Aged Poor Commission *April* 25, 1611
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CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J., *Birmingham, W.*
Aged Poor Commission *April* 5, 1029; *April* 25, 1610
Course of Public Business *April* 1, 608
Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 4, 995; *April* 5, 1035
London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 900, 901
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Supply: Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 399, 400, 407, 431

CHANNING, Mr. F. A., *Northampton, E.*
Reports on Agriculture, Bounties, and Trade Abroad *April* 4, 914

CHAPLIN, Right Hon. H., *Lincolnshire, Sleaford*
Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1706

**CHARITY COMMISSION**
Parliamentary Charity Commissioner—
Mr. F. S. STEVENSON

Mr. J. Ellis *(Motion)*, 1505, 1521, 1528, 1542; Mr. H. Lawson, 1513, 1531, 1546; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, 1520, 1521; Mr. Acland, 1521, 1548; Sir S. Northcote, 1525, 1528; Mr. F. S. Stevenson, 1528, 1531; Mr. J. Collings, 1535, 1542; Mr. J. W. Lowther, 1542, 1546; Sir F. S. Powell, 1553—*April* 23
*Endowed Secondary Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Roundell; *A.* Mr. Stevenson *April* 1, 568
*Ulverstone—Town Bank Grammar School*, *Q.* Mr. W. Smith; *A.* Mr. Stevenson, *April* 4, 923

**Church Patronage Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. W. H. Fisher *(Motion)* 843, 873; Mr. J. C. Williams, 849; Sir J. Fergusson, 854, 865; Mr. G. Russell, 857; Mr. C. Dodd, 859; Mr. R. Perks, 861; Mr. J. G. Talbot, 863; Mr. Lloyd Morgan, 865; Colonel Sandys, 866; Mr. Warner, 868, 870; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, 869, 870; Mr. MacInnes, 870; Mr. H. J. Roby, 871; Viscount Wolmer, 872; Mr. R. L. Everett, 872 *(Division* 873*)*, Mr. T. M. Healy, 873—*April* 3
Read 2° and referred to the Grand Com. on Law *April* 3, 873

**CIVIL SERVICE**
*Appointments*, *Q.* Mr. H. Paul; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 25, 1616
*Clerks*, *Q.* Mr. J. Macdonald; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 1, 602
*Hertslet (Sir Edward)*, *Q.* Mr. G. Whitelaw; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 1, 590
*Indian Civil Service*, *Q.* Sir R. Temple; *A.* Mr. H. Gladstone *Mar* 29, 474
*Second Division*
*Clerks*, *Qs.* Mr. Paul, Mr. Rentoul; *As.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 1, 574
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CLANCY, Mr. J. J., *Dublin, S.*
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East Wicklow Writ *April* 9, 1255
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CLARK, Dr. G. B., *Caithness*
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) *April* 9, 1366; *April* 22, 1488; *April* 25, 1655
Scotch Business *April* 9, 1367
Supply: Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 492

CLARKE, Sir E., *Plymouth*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 58, 64, 65, 74, 75, 81, 85
Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1184, 1185, 1192, 1195, 1207, 1222, 1223
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**Coal Mines Regulation Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Asquith; Read 1° *April* 4, 942
*Q.* Mr. Tomlinson; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 22, 1488

COCHRANE, Mr. T. H., *Ayrshire, N.*
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 9, 1367
Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 302
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CODDINGTON, Mr. W., *Blackburn*
H.M.S. "*Sharpshooter*" *April* 9, 1294

COHEN, Mr. B. L., *Islington, E.*
Discharge of Fever Patients *April* 1, 572, 574
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1426
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COLLINGS, Right Hon. JESSE, *Birmingham, Bordesley*
Charity Commission *April* 23, 1535, 1542

**COLONIES**
Secretary of State—Marquess of RIPON
Under Secretary of State—Mr. S. BUXTON

*British Honduras*, *Qs.* Mr. E. B. Hoare; *As.* Mr. S. Buxton *April* 9, 1263
*Colonial Appeals*—Notice to introduce Bill, Lord Herschell *April* 8, 1118
*Cyprus* (see that Title)
*Duties on British Goods*, *Q.* Colonel H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. S. Buxton *April* 1, 571
*Finance Act and the Colonies*, *Qs.* Mr. Maclure; *As.* Mr. Buxton, Sir W. Harcourt *April* 22, 1402
*International Monetary Conference*, *Q.* Mr. Hogan; *A.* Mr. S. Buxton *April* 4, 916

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*COLONIES*—cont.
*Military Contributions (Colonial)*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. S. Buxton *Mar* 28, 339; *April* 1, 591
*Spirits imported into British Possessions*, *Q.* Mr. Jacob Bright; *Q.* Mr. S. Buxton *April* 1, 579

COLSTON, Mr. C., *Gloucester, Thornbury*
Sub-Postmasters *April* 8, 1151

*Commercial Reports, No. 2 (1895)*
Reports presented *April* 22, 1398

COMMINS, Dr., *Cork Co., S.E.*
Collector of Customs at Kinsale *Mar* 25, 19
Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1335

CONDON, Mr. T. J., *Tipperary, E.*
Carrick-on-Suir Union *Mar* 29, 469

*Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill* (see WAYS AND MEANS)

*Contracts*
"*Army List*"—*The*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 2, 730
*For Foreigners*—Address for Return *April* 4, 941
*Government Clothing—Sub-Contractors*, *Q.* Mr. W. F. D. Smith; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 8, 1158
*Government Contracts and Wages*, *Qs.* Mr. Caldwell, Captain Norton, Mr. Darling; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 1, 583
*Parliamentary Debates* (see that title)

**Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act (1879) Amendment Bill**
*l.* Report of Amendments agreed to *Mar* 25, 8
Read 3ª with Amendts. and Passed; returned to Commons *Mar* 26, 137
Royal Assent *April* 9, 1253

CONYBEARE, Mr. C. A. V., *Cornwall, Camborne*
Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1110

COOKE, Mr. C. W. R., *Hereford*
Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1218

**Court of Criminal Appeal Bill**
*c.* 2R. Sir H. James, 875; Mr. T. M. Healy, 876; Mr. H. D. Greene, 876—*April* 3
Read 2° and referred to a Select Com. *April* 3, 876

COURTNEY, Right Hon. L. H., *Cornwall, Bodmin*
Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 294, 295 [*cont.*

COURTNEY, Right Hon. L. H.—*cont.*
Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 1077, 1081
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**Courts of Law Fees (Scotland) Bill**
*c.* Read 2° *Mar* 29, 560
In Com., Sir H. E. Maxwell, Mr. J. B. Balfour. Clauses agreed to *April* 2, 819
Rep. without Amendts. and Read 3° *April* 2, 819
*l.* Read 1ª *April* 4, 888
2R. Lord Herschell *(Motion) April* 8, 1125
Read 2ª *April* 8, 1125

CRAWFORD, Mr. D., *Lanark, N.E.*
Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 25, 1691
Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894 *Mar* 25, 23
Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 841

CREAN, Mr. E., *Queen's Co., Ossory*
Canteen Supplies in Cork *April* 2, 717
Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1343

**Crédit Foncier of Mauritius Bill**
Royal Assent *April* 9, 1253

CRILLY, Mr. D., *Mayo, N.*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1585, 1591, 1595, 1600, 1601

*Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts, 1886–87.*
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**Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill**
Sir G. Trevelyan (*Motion* for Leave to introduce Bill). Mr. A. J. Balfour *April* 8, 1247
Dr. Clark, 1366; Mr. Asquith, 1366, 1367; Mr. Buchanan, 1366; Dr. Macgregor, 1367; Mr. Cochrane, 1367; Mr. Tomlinson, 1367 —*April* 9
Sir G. Trevelyan, 1635, 1651; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1648, 1651; Dr. Farquharson, 1653; Dr. G. B. Clark, 1655; Sir D. Macfarlane, 1656; Dr. Macgregor, 1657; Mr. G. Murray, 1660; Mr. J. G. Weir, 1664; Mr. Buchanan, 1665; Mr. M. Shaw-Stewart, 1666; Mr. M. Napier, 1668—*April* 25
*Q.* Dr. Clark; *A.* Mr. T. Ellis *April* 22, 1488. *Qs.* Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Forwood; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 23, 1503
*c.* Intro., Sir G. O. Trevelyan; Read 1° *April* 25, 1670

CROMBIE, Mr. J. W., *Kincardineshire*
Illegal Trawling on the Scotch Coast *April* 23, 1495 [*cont.*

CROMBIE, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*
Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1894, *Mar* 25, 23
Stonehaven Harbour *Mar* 28, 322

CROSFIELD, Mr. W., *Lincoln*
Indian Cantonments *April* 4, 922, 923
Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1717
Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1717
Supply—£4,439,268 Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 385

CROSS, Mr. A., *Glasgow, Camlachie*
London County Council (Tramways) Bill *April* 4, 902
Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1091, 1102

CROSS, Viscount
Chitral *April* 2, 703
Endowed Schools Act (1869) and Amending Acts (Scheme for the Management of Hanbury's Charity, Church Langton, Leicester), *Motion* for Address to Her Majesty *Mar* 26, 137, 145, 146

CURRAN, Mr. T. B., *Kilkenny*
Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway *April* 8, 1155

CURZON, Hon. G. N., *Lancashire, Southport*
Chitral Affairs *Mar* 25, 43
Pamirs—The *April* 1, 583
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CURZON, Viscount, *Bucks, Wycombe*
Bank and Consols *April* 1, 604
Machine Guns *April* 25, 1625

**CUSTOMS, EXCISE AND INLAND REVENUE**
*Collector of Customs at Kinsale*, *Q.* Dr. Commins; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 25, 19
*Commisssoners of Inland Revenue*, *Qs.* Mr. Bowles, Mr. Webster; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 9, 1294
*Excise Revenue in the Punjab*, *Q.* Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 1, 580
*Exported Spirits*, *Q.* Mr. S. Will; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 28, 354
*Income Tax on Shipping*, *Qs.* Mr. Parker-Smith, Mr. Lawrence; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 4, 937
*Inland Revenue Officers*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 26, 175
*Land Tax*, *Q.* Mr. Hanbury; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 25, 45
*Legacy and Succession Duty Office*, *Q.* Mr. Macdonald; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 937
*Public Revenue Accounts*, *Qs.* Mr. Bowles; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 935

*Cyprus*
*Return respecting the Revenues*—laid before the House of Lords *April* 2, 701 [*cont.*

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*Tribute*, *Q.* Mr. Pierpoint; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 937. *Qs.* Mr. Banbury, Mr. Pierpoint; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 8, 1159

DALRYMPLE, Sir CHARLES, Bart., *Ipswich*
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DALZIEL, Mr. J. H., *Kirkcaldy Burghs*
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DANE, Mr. R. M., *Fermanagh, N.*
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DARLING, Mr. C. J., *Deptford.*
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DARWIN, Major LEONARD, *Staffordshire, Lichfield*
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DAVENPORT, Mr. W. BROMLEY, *Cheshire, Macclesfield*
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DAVIES, Mr. W. R., *Pembrokeshire*
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*Decies, Lord (Claims to vote for Representative Peers for Ireland)*
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DIAMOND, Mr. C., *Monaghan, N.*
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DIGBY, Mr. J. K. WINGFIELD-, *Dorset, N.*
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DILKE, Right Hon. Sir C. W., *Gloucester, Forest of Dean*
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DILLON, Mr. J., *Mayo, E.*
Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 4, 980, 989
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DISRAELI, Mr. C. R., *Cheshire, Altrincham*
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DIXON-HARTLAND, Sir F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
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**Documentary Evidence Bill**
*c.* Read 2° *April* 5, 1082
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DODD, Mr. C. J. S., *Essex, Maldon*
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  Commissioners *April* 4, 926, 927
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North Staffordshire Railway Bill, 3R. *Mar* 25, 17
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DONELAN, Captain A. J. C., *Cork, E.*
Canteen Supplies in Cork *April* 2, 715, 717
Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill, 3R. *Mar* 25, 133
Factory Inspection in Ireland *Mar* 25, 32
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DONKIN, Mr. R. S., *Tynemouth*
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*Druidical Stones*
*Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. H. Gladstone *Mar* 26, 150

DYKE, Right Hon. Sir W. H., *Kent, Dartford*
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*East Wicklow Writ*
Mr. Clancy *(Motion)*, 1255; Sir T. Esmonde, 1256; Mr. T. Sexton, 1256; Mr. J. Redmond, 1256—*April* 9

*Ecclesiastical Commissioners*
*Qs.* Mr. Dodd; *As.* Mr. Leveson-Gower *April* 4, 926

*Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Allotments*
*Qs.* Mr. Stevenson, Mr. Dodd; *As.* Mr Leveson-Gower *April* 9, 1274

*Ecclesiastical Suit*
*Q.* Sir W. Houldsworth; *A.* Mr. G. Leveson-Gower *Mar* 26, 174

*Ecclesiastical Tithe Rent-charge in Ireland*
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**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (England and Wales)**

Lord President—Earl of ROSEBERY
Vice President—Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND
*Aberdaron District Board, Pwllheli, Q.* Mr. S. Leighton; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 26, 1730

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*EDUCATION DEPARTMENT*—cont.

*Assistant Teachers in Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 934

*Elementary School Teachers*, *Qs.* Mr. Hulse, Mr. H. S. Foster; *As.* Mr. Acland *April* 25, 1615

*Evening Continuation Schools*, *Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 9, 1283

*Examination of Acting Teachers*, *Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 9, 1283

*Glamorganshire Intermediate Education Scheme*, *Q.* Mr. D. Thomas; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 25, 1627

*Industrial Education in Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 8, 1158

*List of School Districts with Standards*—Pres. *April* 8, 1117

*Lowestoft School Accommodation*, *Q.* Mr. H. Foster; *A.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 28, 355; *Qs.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *As.* Mr. Acland *April* 1, 576

*Monitors in Irish Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 177

*New Education Code*, Lord Norton, 445; Earl Fortescue, 448; Bishop of London, 452; Archbishop of Canterbury, 457; Earl of Harrowby, 458; Lord Playfair, 460, 464; Earl Stanhope, 464—*Mar* 29. *Qs.* Mr. Round, Mr. J. Seymour Keay, Mr. J. H. Johnstone, Mr. J. G. Talbot; *As.* Mr. Acland, Sir G. O. Trevelyan—*Mar* 26, 155. *Q.* Mr. Anstruther; *A.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 28, 324. *Qs.* Mr. Talbot, Mr. Arnold-Forster; *As.* Mr. Acland *April* 2, 727

*St. Andrew's Infant School, Lowestoft*, *Qs.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *As.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 28, 348

*School Accounts and Registers*, *Qs.* Mr. Legh; *As.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 25, 44

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*Elections*, *Q.* Mr. Donkin; *A.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 29, 471

*Rate*, *Q.* Mr. Grove; *A.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 29, 467; *April* 9, 1296

*School Ventilation and New Code*, *Q.* Sir F. S. Powell; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 9, 1279

*Science and Art*

*Museums—Dublin and Edinburgh*, *Q.* Mr. W. Kenny; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 4, 935

*Royal College, Dublin* *Q.* Mr. W. Kenny; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 5, 1026

*Students*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Acland *Mar* 28, 345

*Students (Ireland)*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 8, 1132

*Scotch Education Code*, *Q.* Mr. J. Campbell; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 29, 471

*Education (Science and Art)*

Copy Pres. of the Forty-second Annual Report *April* 3, 821

*Education (Scotland)*

Report by J. Struthers, Esquire, Pres. *April* 22, 1398

*Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act, 1885*

Scheme for the management of the Banks Endowment Eyreount *April* 5, 1021

**Elections (Second Ballot and Returning Officers' Expenses) Bill**

*c.* Order for 2R. read and discharged; Bill withdrawn *April* 3, 821

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Acton) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Read 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Bristol) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Carrington; Read 1ª *April* 8, 1117

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Hornsey) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Red 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Leeds) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Carrington; Read 1ª *April* 8, 1118

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Liverpool) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Read 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Lowestoft) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Read 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Manchester) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Read 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Pwllheli) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Kensington; Read 1ª *April* 2, 701

**Elementary Education Provisional Order Confirmation (Weston-super-Mare) Bill**

*l.* Pres., Lord Carrington; Read 1ª *April* 8, 1117

ELLIS, Mr. J., *Notts, Rushcliffe*

Commissions
Charity *April* 23, 1505, 1521, 1528, 1542
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ELLIS, Mr. T. E., *Merionethshire*
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 22, 1488
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*Emigration and Immigration.*
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*Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and Amending Acts (Scheme for the Management of Hanbury's Charity, Church Langton, Leicester.)*
Viscount Cross *(Motion)*, 137, 145, 146: Lord Monkswell, 140; Marquess of Salisbury, 143, 144, 145; Earl of Kimberley, 144, 148; Lord Herschell, 145, 146, 148; Archbishop of Canterbury, 145; Lord Halsbury, 146, 148—*Mar* 26

ERNE, Earl of
Richmond Lunatic Asylum *Mar* 25, 8

ESMONDE, Sir T. J., *Kerry, W.*
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Hawaiian Revolution *April* 8, 1139
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**Established Church (Wales) Bill.**
*c.* 2R. Sir G. O. Morgan, 50, 58; Sir E. Clarke, 58, 64, 65, 74, 75, 81, 85; Mr. A. Thomas, 64, 65; Mr. Asquith, 74, 75; Sir F. Lockwood, 78, 81, 85, 87, 118; Mr. H. Matthews, 87; Colonel Lockwood, 90; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 93; Mr. Wodehouse, 101, 103; Mr. MacNeill, 103; Mr. W. R. Davies, 108; Mr. Jebb, 114, 118; Mr. W. Johnston, 117; Mr. H. J. Roby, 123, 125 [Mr. Speaker, 125]—*Mar* 25
Mr. D. R. Plunket, 180, 181; Mr. Roby, 181; Mr. G. Russell, 193; Viscount Wolmer, 205, 213; Mr. A. Thomas, 216; Mr. J. H. Stock, 217; Sir S. Montagu, 220; Mr. J. A. Campbell, 220; Mr. R. Wallace, 223; Sir H. S. King, 229; Mr. A. J. Williams, 233; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, 237, 241, 248, 257; Mr. J. H. Lewis, 240; Mr. Lloyd George, 247, 248, 257; Sir J. Gorst, 259, 262, 263; Mr. Asquith, 262, 263—*Mar* 26
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Read 2° *April* 1, 699
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EVANS, Mr. S. T., *Mid Glamorgan*
Distress Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 699
Perjury Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 818
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EVERETT, Mr. R. L., *Suffolk, Woodbridge*
Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 872

EVERSHED, Mr. S., *Staffordshire, Burton*
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**Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill**
*l.* 2R. Lord Halsbury, 2; Lord Herschell, 5; Lord Ashbourne, 6; Lord Morris, 7; Marquess of Salisbury, 8—*Mar* 25
Read 2ª *Mar* 25, 8
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**Evidence in Criminal Cases (No. 2) Bill**
*l.* Read 2ª *Mar* 25, 8
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**Factories and Workshops Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. Asquith *(Motion)* 1403, 1446, 1452, 1470; Mr. Stuart-Wortley, 1403, 1424; Mr. Tennant, 1411; Mr. G. Whiteley, 1417, 1421; Mr. Broadhurst, 1420, 1421, 1424; Mr. Cohen, 1426; Mr. Schwann, 1430; Sir F. S. Powell, 1433; Mr. W. Hazell, 1436; Mr. H. Seton-Karr, 1438; Mr. Johnson-Ferguson, 1440; Mr. H. Matthews, 1452, 1479, 1486; Sir A. Hickman, 1456; Mr. W. Allen, 1457; Mr. Tomlinson, 1458, 1460; Mr. S. Buxton, 1460, 1471; Mr. Bartley, 1461; Sir C. Dilke, 1464; Sir J. Gorst, 1467, 1470; Mr. W. Whitelaw, 1476; Mr. D. Randell, 1479; Mr. J. Caldwell, 1486; General Goldsworthy, 1486—*April* 22
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*Q.* Mr. Whitelaw; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 29, 470
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**Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. J. Seymour Keay, 297, 300, 302, 306, 307, 311; Sir H. Maxwell, 300, 310, 311;

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*Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill*—cont.
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Farquharson, Dr. R., *Aberdeenshire, W.*
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill, 1R. *April* 25, 1653
Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 309
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**Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. G. Murray 1683, 1695; Mr. Renshaw 1684, 1696; Mr. Harry Smith 1688; Sir C. Pearson, 1689, 1696, 1697; Mr. D. Crawford, 1691; Mr. J. B. Balfour 1693, 1695, 1696, 1699, 1700; Mr. A. C. Morton 1696, 1697; Mr. J. Burns 1698; Dr. MacGregor 1699—*April* 25
Read 2° *April* 25, 1700

Fenwick, Mr. C., *Northumberland, Wansbeck*
Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R *April* 3, 823, 843

Fergusson, Right Hon. Sir J., *Manchester, N.E.*
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Ffrench, Mr. P., *Wexford, S.*
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Field, Admiral E., *Sussex, Eastbourne*
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Field, Mr. W., *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
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  Mails *April* 1, 565, 566; *April* 9, 1282
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**Fires (False Alarm) Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Conybeare; Read 1° *April* 25, 1728

Fisher, Mr. W. H., *Fulham*
Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 843, 873

**Fisheries Acts Amendment Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Bryce; Read 1° *Mar* 27, 316

**Fisheries (Close Season) (Ireland) Bill**
*c.* Intro., Captain Donelan; Read 1° *April* 5, 1033

Flynn, Mr. J. C., *Cork, N.*
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**FOREIGN OFFICE**
Secretary of State—Earl of Kimberley
Under Secretary of State—Sir E. Grey

*Agriculture, Bounties and Trade Abroad—Reports*, *Qs.* Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Mr. James Lowther, Mr. Channing; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 4, 913
*Balfour (Jabez Spencer)* *Qs.* Mr. Darling; *As.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 25, 46. *Qs.* Mr. Darling, Mr. Bowles; *As.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 26, 170. *Qs.* Mr. Darling; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 4, 939. *Q.* Mr. Darling; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 8, 1150
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*China and Japan*, *Qs.* Sir G. Baden-Powell, Captain Bethell; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 9, 1293. *Q.* Mr. T. G. Bowles; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1500. *Q.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 26, 1737
*Hawaii*, *Q.* Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 8, 1139. *Q.* Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 9, 1284. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Dr. Macgregor, Mr. Hogan; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 25, 1622

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*Japanese Commercial Privileges in China, Q.* Sir R. Temple; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 25, 1621
*Mackerel Duties in Russia and United States, Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 1, 564
*Madagascar, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1149. *Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 9, 1289. *Q.* Mr. J. C. Macdona; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1491
*Matacong Island* (see AFRICA)
*Nicaragua, Qs.* Colonel H. Vincent; *As.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 25, 35
*Nicaragua Canal, Qs.* Sir E. Harland; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 9, 1265
*Pamirs, Q.* Mr. G. Curzon; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 1, 583
*Queen Liliokuolani, Q.* Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1490
*Russian Sailor, Q.* Mr. Byles; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 8, 1148
*Samoa*
  *Affairs, Q.* Mr. Hogan; *A.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 25, 39
  *British Consul in, Q.* Mr. Hogan; *A.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 25, 39
*Seal Fisheries, Qs.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. S. Buxton *April* 9, 1267
*Shipment of Sailors and Firemen at Foreign Ports, Qs.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1134
*Siam, Qs.* Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. Bowles; *As.* Sir. E. Grey *Mar* 26, 172. *Q.* Mr. Bowles; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1493
*Slavery and the Mombasa Railway* (see RAILWAYS)
*Slaves—Employment of, by British Subjects, Q.* Mr. T. Bayley; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 25, 1617
*Treaty of Berlin, Qs.* Mr. Aird; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 2, 729
*Venezuela, Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 8, 1153

*Foreign Prison-made Goods*
*Qs.* Col. H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 4, 933

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Education Code *Mar* 29, 448

**FORWOOD**, Right Hon. A. B., *Lancashire, Ormskirk.*
Boiler Explosion
  At Glasgow *April* 4, 920
  At Govan *April* 2, 734
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**FOSTER**, Mr. H. S., *Suffolk, Lowestoft*
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**FOSTER**, SIR B. W. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Derbyshire, Ilkeston*
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**FOWLER**, Mr. M., *Durham City*
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**FRY**, Sir T., *Darlington*
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**FRYE**, Mr. F. C., *Kensington, N.*
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**GARDNER**, RIGHT HON. H. C. (President of the Board of Agriculture), *Essex, Saffron Walden*
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  Canadian *Mar* 28, 323
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  Stirling Market *Mar* 25, 22
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*General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877*
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**GEORGE**, Mr. LLOYD-, *Carnarvon Borough*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 247, 248, 257
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GIBBS, Mr. V., *Herts, St. Albans*
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GILHOOLY, Mr. J., *Cork County, W.*
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GLADSTONE, RIGHT HON. H. J. (First Commissioner of Works), *Leeds, W.*
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GOLDSMID, Sir J., *St. Pancras, S.*
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GOLDSWORTHY, General W. T., *Hammersmith*
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GORST, Right Hon. Sir J. E., *Cambridge University*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 259, 262, 263; *April* 1, 610
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GOSCHEN, Right Hon. G. J., *St. George's, Hanover Square*
Course of Business *April* 8, 1160
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 629, 630, 632, 635, 639, 698
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Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1233, 1240, 1244
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GOWER, MR. GEORGE G. LEVESON- (Comptroller of the Household), *Stoke-upon-Trent*
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  Commissioners *April* 4, 926, 927
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GRAHAM, Mr. H. R., *St. Pancras, W.*
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**Grand Juries (Ireland) No. 2) Bill**
*l.* Passed through Com. and Rep. *Mar* 25, 1
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Read 3ª with Amendts. and Passed *April* 5, 1022

**Great Eastern Railway Bill**
Mr. Dodd, 704, 709; [Mr. Speaker, 704, 705;] Mr. Macdonald *(Motion)*, 704, 707, 711; Mr. A. Grove, 704, 705; Mr. Bowles, 704, 710; Colonel Lockwood, 705; Mr. Bryce, 706, 708; Major Rasch, 708; Mr. James Lowther, 709; Mr. Stuart Wortley, 711; Sir C. Dilke, 711; Sir J. Goldsmid, 711 *(Motion withdrawn*, 712*)* —*April* 2
*c.* 3R. Mr. Dodd, 1022; Mr. Bryce, 1023—*April* 5
Read 3º *April* 5, 1023

**Great Southern and Western Railway Bill**
*c.* Re-com. to Com. of the Whole House, considered in Com., Rep. with Amendt. *April* 5, 1022

GREENE, Mr. H. D., *Shrewsbury*
Court of Criminal Appeal Bill *April* 3, 876
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GREY, SIR E. (Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), *Northumberland, Berwick*
Armenia
  Evidence before the Commission *April* 4, 931, 932
  Outrages *April* 1, 594
  Prisoners *Mar* 25, 36
Balfour (Jabez Spencer) *Mar* 25, 47; *Mar* 26, 170; *April* 4, 939; *April* 8, 1151
British India *Mar* 28, 321; *April* 23, 1490, 1491
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France and Central Africa *Mar* 28, 350
French Expeditions in Niger Company's Territories *Mar* 28, 353
Hawaii *April* 8, 1139; *April* 9, 1284; *April* 25, 1623, 1624
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Japanese Commercial Privileges in China *April* 25, 1621
Mackerel Duties in Russia and United States *April* 1, 564, 565
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Malwa Opium *April* 23, 1498
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Military Operations in India *Mar* 28, 325
Mombasa and Uganda Railway *April* 25, 1614
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GREY, Sir E.—*cont.*
- Nile
  - Valley—The *April* 1, 594
  - Waterway *April* 4, 932 ; *April* 9, 1289
- Opium Commission Report *April* 23, 1497
- Outbreak at Brass *April* 25, 1624
- Pamirs—The *April* 1, 583
- Poppy Cultivation in Behar and Benares *April* 23, 1491
- Queen Liliokuolani *April* 23, 1490
- Reports on Agriculture, Bounties and Trade Abroad *April* 4, 914
- Samoa
  - Affairs in *Mar* 25, 39
  - British Consul in *Mar* 25, 39
- Seal Fisheries *April* 9, 1268
- Shipment of Sailors and Firemen at Foreign Ports *April* 8, 1135
- Siam *Mar* 26, 173 ; *April* 23, 1494
- Slavery in East Africa *April* 4, 928
- Slaves—Employment of, by British Subjects *April* 25, 1617
- Slave Traders on the Congo *April* 4, 921, 922
- Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 403, 424, 425, 426
- Treaty of Berlin *April* 2, 729
- Venezuela *April* 8, 1153

**Grocers' Licences Abolition Bill**

*c.* Intro., Mr. Thomas ; Read 1° *April* 9, 1367

GROVE, Mr. T. N. A., *West Ham, N.*
- East London Water Company *April* 8, 1139
- Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 704, 705
- School Board Rate *Mar* 29, 467, 468 ; *April* 9, 1296

GULLY, RIGHT HON. WILLIAM COURT, *Carlisle*
- As Speaker (see that Title)
- As Speaker-Elect *April* 10, 1394, 1395, 1396 ; *April* 22, 1397
- Election of Speaker *April* 10, 1380

HALSBURY, Lord
- Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and Amending Acts (Scheme for the Management of Hanbury's Charity, Church Langton, Leicester) *Mar* 26, 146, 148
- Evidence in Criminal Cases Bill *Mar* 25, 2

HAMILTON, Lord FREDERICK, *Tyrone, N.*
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1602

HAMILTON, Right Hon. Lord GEORGE, *Middlesex, Ealing*
- Paper on "The Machinery of Warships" (Mr. Durston's) *April* 25, 1628
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1310, 1316

HANBURY, Mr. R. W., *Preston*
- Army Annual Bill, 3R. *Mar* 28, 440 ; *Mar* 29, 521
- British Troops in India *Mar* 25, 47

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HANBURY, Mr. R. W.—*cont.*
- Indian Native Troops *Mar* 25, 33
- Land Tax *Mar* 25, 45
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1347, 1360
- Supply
  - £4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 366, 378
  - Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 475
- Surgeon Major-Generals in India *April* 9, 1285

**Handloom Weavers (Ireland) Bill**

*c.* Order for 2R. read and discharged ; Bill withdrawn *April* 8, 1251

HARCOURT, RIGHT HON. SIR W. G. VERNON (Chancellor of the Exchequer), *Derby*
- Bank and Consols *April* 1, 604
- Bank Deposits *April* 8, 1157
- Church of Scotland *Mar* 26, 162
- Commissioners of Inland Revenue *April* 9, 1294, 1295
- Course of Business *Mar* 25, 47, 48 ; *April* 1, 607, 608, 609 ; *April* 2, 734, 735 ; *April* 8, 1160, 1161 ; *April* 23, 1503, 1504
- Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 23, 1503
- Cyprus Tribute *April* 4, 937 ; *April* 8, 1159
- Easter Recess *April* 1, 607 ; *April* 9, 1299
- Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 688, 691, 694, 698
- Exported Spirits *Mar* 28, 354
- Feudatory Native State in India *Mar* 25, 42
- Finance Act and the Colonies *April* 22, 1402
- Financial Relations of England and Ireland *April* 8, 1160
- Gambling in Agricultural Commodities *April* 25, 1634
- Government
  - Bills *Mar* 25, 42
  - Business *April* 25, 1634
  - Clothing Contractors *April* 8, 1158
- Industrial Education in Ireland *April* 8, 1158
- Inland Revenue Officers *Mar* 26, 176
- Land Tax *Mar* 25, 46 ; *April* 5, 1031, 1032
- Legacy and Succession Duty Office *April* 4, 937
- Light Railways *April* 4, 940 ; *April* 9, 1295
- Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 4, 940
- Local Veto Bill *April* 5, 1032 ; *April* 8, 1161, 1171, 1173, 1174, 1178, 1181, 1185, 1191, 1195, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1239, 1247
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- Order of Business *April* 9, 1297, 1298, 1299
- "Parliamentary Debates" Contract *April* 1, 600
- Payment of Members *Mar* 26, 179
- Proposed Harbour Works at Dover *April* 1, 597
- Public Revenue Accounts *April* 4, 935, 936, 937

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HARCOURT, Right Hon. Sir W. G. VERNON—*cont.*
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HARDIE, Mr. J. KEIR, *West Ham, S.*
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HARLAND, Sir E. J., *Belfast, N.*
Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1342
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HAYDEN, Mr. L. P., *Roscommon, S.*
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HAYTER, Right Hon. Sir A. D., *Walsall*
Army Annual Bill, 2R. *Mar* 28, 437
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HAZELL, Mr. WALTER, *Leicester*
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HEALY, Mr. T. J., *Wexford, N.*
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HEALY, Mr. T. M., *Louth, N.*
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Great Southern and Western Railway Bill, 3R. *April* 5, 1022
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HEATH, Mr. JAMES, *Staffordshire, N.W.*
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HEATON, Mr. J. HENNIKER, *Canterbury*
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HENEAGE, Right Hon. HENRY, *Great Grimsby*
Gambling in Agricultural Commodities *April* 25, 1634
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HERSCHELL, LORD (Lord Chancellor)
Colonial Appeals *April* 8, 1118
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Herschell, Lord—*cont.*
- Stannaries Court (Abolition) Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1254
- Speaker of the House of Commons *April* 22, 1397

*Hertslet, Sir Edward* (see Civil Service)

*Herz, Dr. Cornelius* (see Miscellaneous Questions)

HIBBERT, Right Hon. Sir JOHN T. (Financial Secretary to the Treasury), *Oldham*
- Aged Poor Commission *April* 25, 1611
- "Army List"—The *April* 2, 730
- Artisans' Houses at Mullingar *April* 5, 1026
- Canteen Supplies in Cork *April* 4, 930
- Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway *Mar* 28, 353; *April* 2, 718, 719; *April* 8, 1154
- Civil Service
  - Appointments *April* 25, 1617
  - Clerks *April* 1, 602
  - Second Division Clerks *April* 1, 574
- Collector of Customs at Kinsale *Mar* 25, 20
- Drainage Obstruction—A *Mar* 26, 166
- Free Grants to Irish Railways *April* 4, 919
- Hand and Mould made Paper *April* 2, 712
- Hertslet (Sir Edward) *April* 1, 590
- Highlands and Islands Commission *April* 25, 1631
- Income Tax on Shipping *April* 4, 938, 939
- Irish Light Railways *April* 2, 723
- Killybegs Pier *Mar* 26, 163
- Law and Justice Estimates *April* 5, 1028
- Limerick and Killaloe Canal *Mar* 28, 334
- Local Registration of Title Act *April* 9, 1293
- Londonderry Court House *April* 9, 1267
- Office of Woods and Forests *April* 8, 1156, 1157
- "Parliamentary Debates" *Mar* 28, 337, 338; *April* 1, 598, 599, 600, 601; *April* 23, 1496
- Post Cards *Mar* 25, 18, 19; *April* 5, 1029
- Prison Clerkships *April* 9, 1296
- Publication of Wills *April* 26, 1738
- Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1772, 1775, 1783
- Royal Liver Friendly Society *April* 25, 1629
- Science and Art Museum, Dublin *April* 9, 1288
- Second Division Clerks in Dublin *April* 9, 1286
- Suck Drainage *April* 1, 587, 609
- Supply—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 358, 366, 367, 370, 376, 379, 380, 381
- Tralee and Dingle Railway *April* 8, 1140; *April* 23, 1494
- Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill *April* 25, 1726, 1727, 1728
- Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Redemption Bill *April* 2, 820
- Wages and Government Contracts *April* 1, 583, 584
- Wicklow Breakwater *April* 8, 1131
- Winding-up of Public Companies *April* 25, 1633

Hickman, Sir A., *Wolverhampton, W.*
- Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1456
- Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 826, 841

Hicks-Beach, Right Hon. Sir M. E., *Bristol*
- Course of Business *Mar* 25, 48; *April* 2, 734
- Industrial Schools *Mar* 25, 38
- Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 291, 292, 293
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- Reports on Agriculture, Bounties, and Trade Abroad *April* 4, 913, 914
- Welsh Commissioners *April* 4, 915; *April* 9, 1259

Hoare, Mr. E. B., *Hampstead*
- British Honduras *April* 9, 1263, 1264

Hobhouse, Mr. C. E. H., *Wilts, Devizes*
- Local Government Act 1894 *April* 4, 934
- Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1095

Hogan, Mr. J. F., *Mid Tipperary*
- Hawaii *April* 25, 1623
- Monetary Conference *April* 1, 606; *April* 916
- Samoa
  - Affairs in *Mar* 25, 39
  - British Consul in *Mar* 25, 39
- Templemore Barracks *April* 23, 1499

Holland, Mr. W. H., *Salford, N.*
- Indian Import Duties *Mar* 26, 168
- Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1086, 1091

**HOME DEPARTMENT**

Secretary of State—Mr. H. H. Asquith
Under Secretary of State—Mr. G. W. E. Russell

- *Alleged Perjury Case*, *Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 26, 1733
- *Assault on a Dock Labourer*, *Q.* Mr. Burnie; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 26, 177
- *Barnsley Police Case*, *Q.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 8, 1131
- "*Bond Tea*," *Qs.* Mr. Frye; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 932
- *Cab-trade Grievances*, *Q.* Mr. Aird; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 33
- *City and Members of Parliament*, *Q.* Mr. A. Spicer; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 26, 162
- *Cloth Factories*, *Qs.* Mr. S. Woods, Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 26, 160
- *Convict M'Cann*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1286
- *Defrauding a Railway Company* (see Railways)
- *Denbigh Asylum*, *Q.* Mr. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1290

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*HOME DEPARTMENT*—cont.
  *Factories and Workshops Bill*, *Q.* Mr. W. Whitelaw; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 29, 470
  *Factory and Workshops Acts*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 912
  *Factory Inspection (Ireland)*, *Qs.* Mr. Sexton, Mr. Johnston, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 31
  *Female Factory Inspectors*, *Qs.* Mr. Austin, Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 927
  *Gas Cylinders*, *Q.* Mr. Newdigate; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 1, 592. *Q.* Mr. A. Chamberlain; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1276
  *Industrial Schools*, *Q.* Sir M. Hicks-Beach; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 38
  *Inspector Ruff, Metropolitan Police*, *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1291
  *Irish Prisoners*, *Qs.* Mr. Field; *As.* Mr Asquith *April* 1, 575
  *Leeds New Industrial School*, *Q.* Mr. Knox; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 1, 595
  *Lion Tamers' Exhibitions*, *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 28, 326
  *London Cab Trade*, *Q.* Mr. Aird; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 26, 1732
  *Mining Explosions*, *Q.* Mr. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 32
  "*Particulars Clause*"—*The*, *Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1258
  *Prison Clerks* (see LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE)
  *Reformatory Ship* "*Clarence*," *Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 29, 470; *April* 4, 920
  *Russian Sailor*, *Qs.* Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 8, 1148
  *Snailbeach Quartz Mine Accident*, *Q.* Mr. D. Thomas; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 17. *Q.* Mr. S. Leighton; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 29, 466
  *Tearing-up of Union Clothes*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 1, 574
  *Theatre Royal, Rugby*, *Q.* Mr. Bolton; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 2, 733
  *Unemployed* (see that title)
  *Welsh*
    *Churchyard Dispute*, *Q.* Mr. J. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1262
    *Commissioners*, *Q.* Sir M. Hicks-Beach; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 915; *April* 9, 1259
  *Women Workers in Textile Factories*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 5, 1029

HOPE, Captain T., *Linlithgow*
  Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 308
  Parish Polling Places *Mar* 28, 343
  Rural Postmen in Scotland *April* 23, 1492
  Volunteer Long-service Medals *Mar* 28, 332

HOULDSWORTH, Sir W. H., *Manchester, N.W.*
  Ecclesiastical Suit *Mar* 26, 174

**House Tax Consolidation Bill**
*c.* Intro., Sir J. T. Hibbert; Read 1° *April* 4, 942

*Howard-Vincent, Colonel* (see VINCENT)

HOWELL, Mr. G., *Bethnal Green, N.E.*
  Poor Law *April* 1, 571
  Savings Banks *April* 1, 605

HOZIER, Mr. J. H. C., *Lanarkshire, S.*
  Church of Scotland *Mar* 26, 162
  Course of Business *April* 8, 1160
  Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 23, 1503
  Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 4, 940
  Scotch
    Boundaries *April* 25, 1626
    Business *April* 9, 1368

HULSE, Mr. E. H., *Salisbury*
  Elementary School Teachers *April* 25, 1615

HUGHES, Colonel, *Woolwich*
  Ordnance Store Corps *April* 2, 726
  Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1754, 1775

HUMPHREYS-OWEN, Mr. A. C., *Montgomeryshire*
  Supply: Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 500, 502

**INDIA**
    Secretary of State—Mr. H. H. FOWLER
    Under Secretary of State—Lord REAY
  *Army*, *Q.* Mr. Kimber; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 1, 602
  *Army Pensions* (see PENSIONS)
  *British India*, *Q.* Mr. Naoroji; *A.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 28, 321. *Q.* Mr. Naoroji; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 4, 908. *Qs.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1490
  *British Troops in India*, *Q.* Mr. Hanbury; *A.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 25, 47
  *Cadastral Surveys*, *Q.* Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 25, 1614
  *Cantonments*, *Qs.* Mr. Crosfield; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 4, 922
  *Chitral*, *Q.* Lord Knutsford; *A.* Lord Reay *Mar* 25, 1. *Q.* Hon. G. N. Curzon; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *Mar* 25, 43. *Q.* Viscount Cross; *A.* Lord Reay *April* 2, 703. *Q.* Marquess of Lansdowne; *A.* Lord Reay *April* 4, 877. *Q.* Lord Ashbourne; *A.* Lord Reay *April* 8, 1118. Sir D. Macfarlane; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 22, 1403. *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 25, 1615
  *Chitral: Relief of*—Confirmation of News, Mr. Asquith *April* 22, 1488
  *Civil Service*, *Q.* Sir R. Temple; *A.* Mr. H. Gladstone *Mar* 29, 474
  *Dismissal of an Army Surgeon in Madras*, *Qs.* Mr. Caine; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 25, 1630

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*Excise Revenue in the Punjab*, *Q.* Mr. S. Smith; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 1, 580
*Feudatory Native States*, *Q.* Mr. J. Lowther; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 25, 42
*Frontiers*, *Qs.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 2, 721
*Import Duties*, *Q.* Mr. W. H. Holland; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *Mar* 26, 168
*Madras Staff Corps*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 8, 1149
*Maharajah of Bhurtpore*, *Q.* Mr. J. Seymour Keay; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *Mar* 26, 164
*Malwa Opium*, *Q.* Mr. Schwann; Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1498
*Military Operations*, *Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 28, 325
*National Congress*, *Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Sir E. Grey *Mar* 28, 347
*Native Troops*, *Qs.* Mr. Hanbury; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *Mar* 25, 33
*Opium Commission Report*, *Q.* Mr. J. Ellis; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 4, 911. *Qs.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; Mr. J. Ellis; *As.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1497
*Poppy Cultivation in Behar and Benares*, *Q.* Mr. A. Webb; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 23, 1491
*Procedure Bill*, *Q.* Mr. McLaren; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 9, 1277
*Reports of Royal Commissions*, *Qs.* Mr. Caine, Mr. Dodd; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 25, 1629
*Surgeon Major-Generals*, *Q.* Mr. Hanbury; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 9, 1285
*Schools and Colleges*, *Q.* Mr. Caine; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 25, 1612
*Women in British India Coal Mines*, *Qs.* Mr. Provand; *As.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 26, 1736

*Influenza* (see MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS)

*Insanity* (see LUNACY)

**Institution for Idiots (Exemption from Rates) Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Round; Read 1° *April* 9, 1367

*Intoxicating Liquor Traffic (Local Control) Bill* (see LOCAL VETO BILL)

**IRELAND**

Lord Lieutenant—Lord HOUGHTON
Chief Secretary—Mr. JOHN MORLEY

*Admiralty Rights at Howth*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. W. Kenny; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 9, 1273
*Alleged Deaths from Want in Mayo*, *Q.* Mr. R. Ambrose; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 5, 1027
*Artisans' Houses in Mullingar*, *Q.* Mr. Tuite; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 5, 1026
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*Assistant Teachers*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 934
*Ballymacarret Poor Law Election*, *Q.* Mr. MacNeill; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 569. *Q.* Mr. Young; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1137
*Ballymahon Dispensary District*, *Q.* Mr. Sullivan; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 34
*Bewley (Mr. Justice)*, *Q.* Mr. Smith-Barry; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1159
*Butter Substitutes*, *Qs.* Mr. W. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 37
*Canteen Supplies in Cork* (see ARMY)
*Carboniferous Sandstone*, *Q.* Mr. Yerburgh; *A.* Mr. H. Gladstone *April* 8, 1130
*Carrick-on-Suir Union*, *Qs.* Mr. Power, Mr. Condon; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 29, 468
*Carrying Arms in Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. P. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 167
*Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway* (see RAILWAYS)
*Collector of Custom at Kinsale*, *Q.* Dr. Commins; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 25, 19
*Death from Exposure*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 587
*Distress in*
*Aughamore*, *Qs.* Mr. J. O'Brien, Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1140
*Cavan County*, *Q.* Mr. Knox; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 29
*Cork County*, *Q.* Mr. Flynn; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 30
*Donegal*, *Qs.* Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 30. *Qs.* Mr. MacNeill, Mr. T. D. Sullivan; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1142. *Qs.* Mr. E. M'Hugh, Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1268. *Qs.* Mr. O'Connor, Mr. Sullivan; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1271
*Glenamaddy Union*, *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 587
*Glencoe and Derry*, *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 25, 1619
*Kerry County*, *Q.* Mr. Sexton; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 29
*Leitrim*, *Q.* Mr. P. M'Hugh; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 167. *Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 586. *Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw *April* 2, 724
*Mayo*, *Qs.* Mr. J. O'Brien, Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 27. *Qs.* Mr. J. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 584; *April* 9, 1270
*Tuam*, *Q.* Mr. J. Redmond; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 586
*Drainage Obstruction*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 26, 166
*Dublin and Garristown Railways* (see RAILWAYS)
*Dublin Garrison*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field, Mr. Bowles, Major Rasch; *As.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 28, 345
*Factory Inspection*, *Qs.* Mr. Sexton, Mr. Johnston, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 31
*Financial Relations of England and Ireland*, *Q.* Mr. Goschen; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 8, 1160
*Finnigan (Patrick)—Case of*, *Q.* Mr. Bodkin; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1133
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- *Four Roads, County Roscommon*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 340
- *Industrial Education*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 8, 1158
- *Killybegs Pier*, *Q.* Mr. MacNeill; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 26, 163. *Qs.* Mr. Dane, Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 5, 1024
- *Labourers'*
  - *Acts*, *Qs.* Mr. Austin, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 922
  - *Cottage*, *Q.* Mr. J. Jordan; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 173
  - *Cottages in Strabane Union*, *Q.* Mr. Rentoul; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1278
  - *Dwellings in Fermanagh*, *Q.* Mr. M'Gilligan; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 929
- *Land Commission* *Q.* Mr. Dane; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 917
- *Land Purchase*, *Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 336. *Q.* Mr. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 591
- *Landed Estates Courts Conveyances*, *Q.* Mr. Dane; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1285
- *Light Railways* (see RAILWAYS)
- *Lights Board (Irish)*, *Qs.* Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Wolff; *As.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 26, 171
- *Limerick and Killaloe Canal*, *Q.* Mr. O'Keeffe; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 28, 333
- *Listowel Licensing Sessions*, *Q.* Mr. Dane; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 915
- *Londonderry Court House*, *Qs.* Mr. Ross, Mr. M'Gilligan; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 9, 1266
- *Longford Quarter Sessions*, *Q.* Mr. J. McCarthy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 327
- *Magistrates in County Fermanagh*, *Q.* Mr. M'Gilligan; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 928
- *Mail Service*, *Qs.* Mr. Yerburgh, Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Field, Mr. Kenny; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 1, 565. *Qs.* Mr. W. Kenny, Mr. W. Field, Dr. Kenny; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1281. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1497
- *Maintenance of Lunatics*, *Q.* Mr. Tuite; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 570
- *Medical Services in the Nenagh Union*, *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 25, 1619
- *Monitors in Schools*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 177
- *Monroe (Mr. Justice)—Illness of April* 4, 920
- *National Schools*, *Qs.* Mr. C. Diamond; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 159
- *Naval Programme and Ireland*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond, Dr. Macgregor, Captain Donelan, Mr. Flynn, Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. G. W. Wolff; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson *Mar* 25, 20
- *Outrage at Athea*, *Q.* Mr. Arnold-Forster; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 329
- *Outrage in County Armagh*, *Q.* Mr. MacNeill; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 568
- *Payment of Jurors (Ireland) Bill*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Ross; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1152
- *Police in County Tipperary*, *Q.* Mr. Mandeville; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 930

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- *Portrane Lunatic Asylum, County Dublin*, *Qs.* Mr. Clancy; *As.* Mr. T. Shaw, Mr. J. Morley *April* 2, 732
- *Postal Arrangements*, *Qs.* Mr. Mandeville, Mr. Webb; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1132
- *Prisoners*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 1, 575
- *Proposed Veterinary College*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Kenny, Mr. W. Field; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1284
- *Railway Accident in Ireland* (see RAILWAYS)
- *Rathmines Township Commissioners*, *Q.* Mr. T. M. Healy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 5, 1030
- *Redemption of Rent Act*, *Q.* Mr. Roche; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw *April* 2, 724
- *Refusal to allow a Meeting in Cork*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1287
- *Relief Works*, *Q.* Mr. A. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 165. *Qs.* Mr. Tully, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Knox; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 334. *Qs.* Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 925
- *River Robe Drainage*, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1145
- *Royal Canal*, *Q.* Mr. Tuite; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 4, 916
- *Royal Irish Constabulary Code*, *Q.* Mr. Roche; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw *April* 2, 725. *Q.* Mr. P. J. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1146. *Qs.* Mr. Kennedy; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1284
- *Schull Union*, *Q.* Mr. Gilhooly; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 939
- *Science and Art*
  - *Museum, Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. W. Kenny; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 9, 1288
  - *Museums, Dublin and Edinburgh*, *Q.* Mr. W. Kenny; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 4, 935
  - *Royal College, Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. W. Kenny; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 5, 1026
  - *Students*, *Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Acland *April* 8, 1132
- *Second Division Clerks in Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 9, 1286
- *Soldiers and the Shamrock*, *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. T. M. Healy; *As.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 2, 712. *Qs.* Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 4, 909. *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond; [Mr. Speaker;] *As.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *April* 23, 1500
- *Strokestown*
  - *Medical Officer*, *Qs.* Mr. Hayden, Mr. Bodkin; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 595
  - *Workhouse*, *Qs.* Mr. Hayden, Mr. Tully; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 341
- *Suck Drainage*, *Q.* Mr. J. Redmond; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 1, 587. *Q.* Colonel Nolan; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 1, 609
- *Supply of Pork to the Navy*, *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson *Mar* 25, 22
- *Swine Fever Order*, *Q.* Dr. MacDonnell; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 25, 41
- *Tipperary Magistracy*, *Qs.* Mr. Dane; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1260

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*Training Ship in Irish Waters*, *Qs.* Mr. E. M'Hugh, Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 9, 1273
*Training Ship for Queenstown*, *Qs.* Captain Donelan; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 23, 1496
*Tralee and Dingle Railway* (see Railways)
*Trespassing by Cattle*, *Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 175
*Trinity College, Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. Sexton; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 168. *Q.* Mr. Sexton; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 347
*Tuam Fire*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1153
*Tullamore Water Supply*, *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 340
*Wexford and County Mail*, *Q.* Mr. Ffrench; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1289
*Wicklow Breakwater*, *Q.* Mr. J. O'Connor; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 8, 1130

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Jackson, Right Hon. W. L., *Leeds, N.*
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James, Right Hon. Sir Henry, *Lancashire, Bury*
Court of Criminal Appeal Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 875

Jebb, Mr. R. C., *Cambridge University*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 114, 118
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Jeffreys, Mr., A. F., *Hants, Basingstoke*
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Supply—Report of £4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 520

Johnson-Ferguson, Mr. J. E., *Leicestershire, Loughborough*
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Johnston, Mr. W, *Belfast, S.*
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Johnston, Mr. W.—*cont.*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 117
Factory Inspection in Ireland *Mar* 25, 31
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Sub-Postmaster of Ashleagh, County Mayo *April* 25, 1625
Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 399, 400

Johnstone, Mr. J. H., *Sussex, Horsham*
Army Annual Bill, In Com. *Mar* 28, 442
Assistant Overseers *April* 26, 1734
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Jones, Mr. David Brynmor, *Gloucester, Stroud*
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Jordan, Mr. J., *Meath, S.*
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Keay, Mr. J. Seymour, *Elgin and Nairn*
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Kearley, Mr. H. E., *Devonport*
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Kennedy, Mr. Patrick J., *Kildare, N.*
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Kenny, Dr. J. E., *Dublin, College Green*
Irish Mails *April* 9, 1282, 1283

Kenny, Mr. W., *Dublin, St. Stephen's Green*
Admiralty Rights at Howth *April* 9, 1273
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KENNY, Mr. W.—*cont.*
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KENYON-SLANEY, Colonel W., *Shropshire, Newport*
Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1710
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KILBRIDE, Mr. DENIS, *Kerry, S.*
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KIMBER, Mr. H., *Wandsworth*
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KNOX, Mr. E. F. V., *Cavan, W.*
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*Accommodation for Seamen*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson ; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1135
*Artisans' Houses at Mullingar*, *Q.* Mr. Tuite ; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 5, 1026
*Assault on a Dock Labourer*, *Q.* Mr. Burnie ; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 26, 177
*Enfield Ordnance Factory*, *Q.* Captain Bowles ; *A.* Mr. Woodall *Mar* 28, 325
*Factories and Workshops Bill*, *Q.* Mr. Whitelaw ; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 29, 470. *Q.* Sir C. Dilke ; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 912
*Factory Inspection (Ireland)*, *Q.* Mr. Sexton, Mr. Johnston, Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 31
*Female Factory Inspectors*, *Qs.* Mr. Austin, Mr. Byles ; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 4, 927
*Labourers*
  *Allotments*, *Qs.* Mr. Bucknill ; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 4, 917
  *Cottages in Strabane Union*, *Q.* Mr. Rentoul ; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1278
  *Cottage (Ireland)*, *Q.* Mr. J. Jordan ; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 26, 173
  *Dwellings in Fermanagh*, *Q.* Mr. M'Gilligan ; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 929
  *(Ireland) Acts*, *Qs.* Mr. Austin, Captain Donelan ; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 922
*May Labour Demonstrations*, *Q.* Mr. Burnie ; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 26, 179
*Notice of Accidents Act*, *Q.* Sir A. K. Rollit ; *A.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 29, 471
"*Particulars Clause*"—*The*, *Q.* Mr. S. Woods ; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1258
*Shipment of Sailors and Firemen at Foreign Ports*, *Qs.* Mr. J. H. Wilson ; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1134
*Women Workers in Textile Factories*, *Q.* Sir C. Dilke ; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 5, 1029
*Workmen's Dwellings (Scotland)*, *Q.* Mr. Caldwell ; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *April* 26, 1737

LAMBERT, Mr. G., *Devon, South Molton.*
Margarine *April* 1, 606

**Lancashire and Yorkhsire Railway Bill**
*c.* Order for Consideration, Mr. Dodd *Mar* 26, 150

**Land Clauses (Taxation of Costs) Bill**
*l.* Read $3^{a}$ and Passed *Mar* 25, 12
*c.* Read $1^{\circ}$ *April* 25, 1605

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*c.* 2R. Mr. J. Morley *(Motion)*, 735, 739, 749, 752, 753, 759, 811 ; Mr. Carson, 738, 753, 759, 760 ; Mr. T. W. Russell, 749, 752, 788, 795, 805 ; Sir R. T. Reid, 760 ; Mr. Knox, 767, 788 ; Mr. J. F. Leese, 774 ; Mr. Macartney, 779, 788 ; Mr. T. Lough, 790, 795 ; Mr. Brodrick, 796, 805 ; Mr. Barton, 810, 811—*April* 2
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*Land Law (Ireland) Bill*—cont.
972; Mr. A. Smith-Barry, 974, 975, 976, 980; Mr. J. Dillon, 980,989; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 995—*April* 4
Mr. T. Shaw, 1033, 1035, 1038, 1073; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1035; Mr. Macartney, 1038; Mr. Dane, 1044; Mr. Sexton, 1050, 1051, 1066, 1067, 1071; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1051, 1066, 1067, 1071, 1074, 1075; Mr. J. Morley, 1075; Mr. Courtney, 1077, 1081; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1081—*April* 5
Read 2° *April* 5, 1082

*Land Tax*
*Q.* Mr. Hanbury; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 25. 45. *Qs.* Mr. Bartley; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 5, 1031

**Land Transfer Bill**
*l.* Amendt. Rep. *Mar* 28, 318
3R. Lord Herschell *(Motion)*, 1121 and Amendt. 1125 *April* 8
Read 3ª and passed *April* 8, 1125

LANSDOWNE, Marquess of
Ecclesiastical Tithe Rent-charge in Ireland *April* 4, 879

**Larceny Act Amendment Bill**
*c.* 2R. Sir R. T. Reid *(Motion)*, Mr. J. Ross *April* 2, 817
2R. deferred *April* 2, 817
Read 2° *April* 24, 1603

LAWRENCE, Mr. W. F., *Liverpool, Abercromby*
Income Tax on Shipping *April* 4, 938
Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 827, 828

**LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE**
*Barnsley Police Case, Q.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 8, 1131
*Inspector Ruff, Metropolitan Police, Q.* Mr. Lough; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1291
*Law and Justice Estimates, Q.* Sir A. K. Rollit; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 5, 1027
*Londonderry Court House, Qs.* Mr. Ross, Mr. M'Gilligan; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 9, 1266
*Longford Quarter Sessions,* Mr. J. McCarthy; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *Mar* 28, 327
*Magistrates in County Fermanagh, A.* Mr. M'Gilligan; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 928
*Police in County Tipperary, Q.* Mr. Mandeville; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 4, 930
*Prison Clerks, Q.* Mr. Graham; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 26, 164. *Q.* Mr. M. Fowler; *A.* Mr. Asquith *Mar* 28, 321. *Qs.* Mr. Tomlinson; *As.* Mr. Asquith *April* 5, 1025. *Q.* Mr. C. Shaw; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 9, 1296. *Q.* Mr. T. Lough; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 25, 1630.
[*cont.*

*LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE*—cont.
*Royal Irish Constabulary, Q.* Mr. Roche; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw *April* 2, 725. *Qs.* Mr. Kennedy; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1146; *April* 9, 1284
*Tipperary Magistracy, Qs.* Mr. Dane, Mr. Ross; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1260

**Law of Distress Amendment Act (1888) Bill**
*c.* 2R. Sir R. T. Reid, Mr. S. T. Evans *April* 1, 699
Read 2° *April* 1, 700
In Com., Sir R. E. Webster, Sir R. T. Reid, Mr. Pickersgill *April* 8, 1248. Mr. H. Greene, Sir R. T. Reid *April* 24, 1603

LAWSON, Mr. H. L. W, *Gloucester, Cirencester*
Charity Commission *April* 23, 1513, 1531, 1546
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1769, 1770, 1771
Supply—£4,439, 268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 376

LAWSON, Mr. J. G., *York, N.R., Thirsk and Malton*
Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1709, 1710

LAWSON, Sir WILFRID, *Cumberland, Cockermouth*
Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1199, 1228

LEAKE, Mr. R., *Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe*
Urban District Councils *April* 8, 1157

LEES, Mr. Elliott, *Birkenhead*
Defrauding a Railway Company *April* 2, 783
Fisheries Committees *April* 2, 720, 721
Hand and Mould made Papers *April* 2, 712
Ordnance Stores Department *April* 25, 1620, 1621

LEESE, Mr. J. E., *Lancs, N.E., Accrington*
Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 2, 774

LEFEVRE, RIGHT HON. G. J. SHAW (President of the Local Government Board), *Bradford, Central*
Aged Poor Commission *April* 5, 1029; *April* 25, 1610, 1611
Assistant Overseers *April* 26, 1735
Denbigh Cattle Market *April* 26, 1735
Discharge of Fever Patients *April* 1, 573, 574
District Council Meetings *April* 9, 1259
East Bristol Election *Mar* 28, 348
East London Water Company *April* 8, 1139
Election of Overseers at Bootle *April* 9, 1290
Established Church (Wales) Bill *April* 1, 567
Indoor Paupers in the Metropolis *April* 1, 582, 583
[*cont.*

Lefevre, Right Hon. G. J. Shaw—*cont.*
Labourer's Allotments *April* 4, 918
Local Government Act 1894 *April* 4, 934
Local Taxation *April* 26, 1731
London Water Supply *April* 9, 1276
Parish
Council Meetings *April* 8, 1155
Councils *Mar* 26, 166
Election *April* 2, 726
Meetings *Mar* 28, 342
Poor Law *April* 1, 571
Professional Coroner's Jury *April* 9, 1290
Quarantine *April* 9, 1279
Quinquennial Census *April* 9, 1279
Rateable Value of London *Mar* 28, 351
Relief Wages *April* 4, 918
St. Olave's Union, Southwark *April* 8, 1146; *April* 9, 1292
Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1100, 1102
Traction Engines *April* 23, 1499
Tuberculosis Royal Commission *April* 4, 912; *April* 23, 1500
Urban District Councils *April* 8, 1157
Water Supply *Mar* 28, 331

Legh, Mr. T. W., *Lancashire, S.W., Newton*
School Accounts and Registers *Mar* 25, 44, 45
Supply: Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 513, 514, 518

*Legislation by Reference*
*Motion* by Lord Herschell *April* 5, 1021

Leighton, Mr. S., *Shropshire, Oswestry*
Aberdaron District Board, Pwllheli *April* 26, 1730
Established Church (Wales) Bill *April* 1, 567; *April* 9, 1257
Local Taxation *April* 26, 1731
Snailbeach Mine Accident *Mar* 29, 466

Leng, Sir J., *Dundee*
Bank Deposits *April* 8, 1157
Canadian Cattle *Mar* 28, 323
Lion Tamers' Exhibitions *Mar* 28, 326

**Letting of Sporting Rights Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr Luttrell; Read 1° *April* 2, 735

Lewis, Mr J. H, *Flint Boroughs*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 93; *Mar* 26, 240

*Life Insurances*
Ordered Tables of the Premiums to be Charged, laid before the House *April* 5, 1021
Copy Pres. *April* 5, 1024

**Light Railways Bill**
Mr. J. Bryce *(Motion)* 1700, 1710, 1715, 1716; Mr. Chaplin, 1706; Mr. Grant Lawson, 1709, 1710; Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, 1710; Mr. E. Strachey, 1714, 1715; Captain Bethell, 1716; Mr. W. Crosfield, 1717; Mr. Tomlinson, 1718; Mr. J. A. Pease, 1719; Mr. T. H. Bolton, 1719; Mr. Logan, 1721; Sir M. Hicks-Beach, 1722; Mr. J. G. Weir, 1725—*April* 25
*c.* Intro., Mr. Bryce; Read 1° *April* 25, 1726

*Liquor Traffic Local Veto Bill* (see Local Veto Bill)

Lloyd, Mr. W., *Wednesbury*
Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1365

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD**
President—Mr. G. J. Shaw Lefevre
Secretary—Sir Walter Foster
*Aged Poor Commission, Q.* Mr. Chamberlain; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 5, 1029. *Qs.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, Mr. W. Long, Mr. A. Chamberlain, Mr. J. Burns; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 25, 1610
*Assistant Overseers, Q.* Mr. H. Johnstone; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 26, 1734
*Denbigh Cattle Market, Q.* Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 26, 1735
*Discharge of Fever Patients, Qs.* Mr. Bartley, Mr. Cohen, Sir A. K. Rollit; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 1, 572
*District Council Meetings, Q.* Mr. S. Woods; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1259
*East Bristol Election, Q.* Mr. R. G. Webster; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 28, 348
*East London Water Company. Qs.* Mr. A. Grove; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 8, 1139
*Election of Overseers at Bootle, Q.* Mr. Keir Hardie; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1290
*Established Church (Wales) Bill, Qs.* Mr. S. Smith, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. S. Leighton; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 1, 566
*Indoor Paupers in the Metropolis, Qs.* Mr. Kimber, Mr. P. Thornton, Mr. J. Burns; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 1, 581
*Influenza, Q.* Mr. J. Aird; *A.* Sir W. Foster *April* 26, 1732
*Labourers' Allotments, Qs.* Mr. Bucknill; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 4, 917
*Local Government Act* (1894) *Q.* Mr. Hobhouse; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 4, 934
*Local Taxation, Q.* Mr. S. Leighton; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 26, 1731
*London Water Supply, Q.* Mr. Bigwood; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1276
*Parish*
*Councils, Q.* Mr. Stevenson; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 26, 165
*Council Meetings, Q.* Mr. J. H. Johnstone; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 8, 1155
*Elections, Q.* Mr. Dodd; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 2, 725
*Meetings, Q.* Mr. E. Strachey; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 28, 342

[*cont.*

*LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD*—cont.

*Poor Law*, *Q.* Mr. Howell; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 1, 571
*Professional Coroner's Jury (A)* *Q.* Mr. Keir Hardie; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1290
*Rateable Value of London*, *Q.* Mr. R. G. Webster; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 28, 351
*Relief Wages*, *Q.* Mr. J. Keir Hardie; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 4, 918
*St. Olave's Union, Southwark*, *Qs.* Mr. J. C. Macdona; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 8, 1146; *April* 9, 1292
*Traction Engines*, *Q.* Captain Bagot; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 23, 1498
*Tuberculosis—Royal Commission on*, *Q.* Viscount Wolmer; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 4, 911. *Q.* Mr. Ramsay; *A.* Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, *April* 23, 1500
*Urban District Councils*, *Q.* Mr. R. Leake; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 8, 1157
*Water Supply*, *Qs.* Mr. A. Morton; *As.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre, *Mar* 28, 331

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill**
*l.* Read 2ª and com. to Com. of Whole House *April* 2, 702
Royal Assent *April* 9, 1253

**Local Government (Scotland) Bill**
Sir G. O. Trevelyan *(Motion)* 1670, 1680, 1682; Sir C. Pearson 1675; Mr. C. B. Renshaw 1676; Dr. Macgregor 1679, 1680; Mr. G. Murray 1680; Mr. Anstruther 1680; Mr. J. Caldwell 1681; Mr. John Wilson 1682—*April* 25
*c.* Intro., Sir G. O. Trevelyan; Read 1° *April* 25, 1683
For Questions see Scotland

*Local Legislative Assemblies*
Mr. Dalziel *(Motion)* 523, 536; Mr. Lloyd George 531; Mr. J. Redmond 534, 536; Mr. Neville 539; Mr. J. Dillon 542, 557; Mr. Murray 544; Sir G. O. Trevelyan 548; Mr. A. J. Balfour 554, 557; Dr. Macgregor 560, *(Division* 560,*)*—*Mar* 29

*Local Registration of Title Act*
*Q.* Mr. Dane; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 9, 1293

**Local Veto Bill**
*Q.* Mr. T. W. Russell; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 5, 1032
Sir W. Harcourt *(Motion)*, 1161, 1171, 1173, 1174, 1178, 1181, 1185, 1191, 1195, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1239, 1247; Mr. Cosmo Bonsor, 1171, 1181; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1173; Mr. W. Ambrose, 1174, 1203; Marquess of Carmarthen, 1174, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229; Mr. Courtney, 1178; Sir E. Clarke, 1184, 1185, 1192, 1195, 1207, 1222, 1223; Sir Wilfrid Lawson, 1199, 1228; Mr. H. Broadhurst, 1206, 1208; Mr. Evershed 1210; Mr. Money-Wigram, 1212; Mr. John Wilson, 1216; Mr. Radcliffe Cooke, 1218; Mr. W. S. Caine, 1221, 1222, 1223; Mr. T. W. Russell, 1232; Mr. Goschen, 1233, 1240, 1244; Sir R. T. Reid, 1244—*April* 8
*c.* Intro., Sir W. Harcourt, Read 1° *April* 8, 1247
2R. deferred *April* 24, 1557

**Lockwood, Colonel A.**, *Essex, Epping*
Army Annual Bill, 2R. *Mar* 28, 442
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 90
Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 705
Supply—£4,439,268 Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 369

**LOCKWOOD, Sir FRANK** (Solicitor General), *York*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. Mar 25, 78, 81, 85, 87, 118

**Logan, Mr. J. W.**, *Leicester, Harborough*
Light Railways' Bill *April* 25, 1721

**London, Bishop of**
Education Code *Mar* 29, 452

**London and North Western Railway Bill**
*c.* Mr. C. Dodd, [Mr. Speaker]—*April* 2, 703
Ordered for 3° *April* 2, 704
3R. Mr. Lloyd George, [Mr. Speaker,]—*April* 5, 1023
Mr. Lloyd George, 1605, 1607, 1608, 1609; [Mr. Speaker, 1606, 1608;] Mr. D. R. Plunket, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610; Mr. R. B. Jones, 1607, 1608; Mr. B. Roberts, 1608, 1609; Mr. A. C. Morton, 1609; Mr. J. Burns, 1609; Mr. Bryce, 1610—*April* 25

**London County Council (General Powers) Bill.**
Reported *April* 3, 876

**London County Council Tramways Bill.**
Mr. J. Stuart *(Motion)*, 889, 890, 897, 900; Sir J. B. Maple, 889, 895, 896; Mr. Boulnois, 892, 899; Mr. Benn, 895, 896; Mr. Cohen, 896, 897; Mr. Bryce, 898; Sir A. K. Rollit, 899; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 900, 901; Mr. A. Cross, 902; Mr. J. Burns, 904; Sir J. Lubbock, 906; Dr. Macgregor, 907; *(Division,* 907*)*—*April* 4

**London County Council (Vauxhall Bridge) Bill.**
Reported *April* 3, 876

**London Municipalities Bill.**
Sir C. Dilke, 267, [Mr. Speaker, 268]—*Mar* 27

LONG, Colonel, C. W., *Worcestershire, Evesham*
- Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill *April* 1, 700

LONG, Mr., W. H. *Liverpool, West Derby*
- Aged Poor Commission *April* 25, 1610, 1611
- Office of Woods and Forests *April* 25, 1633
- Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1777

**Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Office Abolition Bill.**
- *c.* Intro., Mr. Ross; Read 1° *April* 8, 1251

*Lord's Day Act*
- Motion for Select Com. to consider what Amendments it is expedient to make *April* 2, 702

*Loss of Life at Sea*
- Copy ordered of Returns for year 1893 *April* 9, 1255

LOUGH, Mr. T., *Islington, W.*
- Inspector Ruff, Metropolitan Police *April* 9, 1291
- Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 790, 795
- Prison Clerks *April* 25, 1630

LOWTHER, Right Hon. JAMES, *Kent, Thanet*
- Feudatory Native State in India *Mar* 25, 42
- Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 709
- Reports on Agriculture, Bounties, and Trade Abroad *April* 4, 914

LOWTHER, Mr. J. W., *Cumberland, Penrith*
- Charity Commission *April* 23, 1542, 1546
- Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1104
- Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 400

LUBBOCK, Sir J., *London University*
- London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 906
- Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1783

*Lunacy*
- *Denbigh Asylum, Q.* Mr. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 9, 1290
- *Maintenance of Lunatics, Q.* Mr. Tuite; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 1, 570
- *Portrane Asylum, County Dublin, Qs.* Mr. Clancy; *As.* Mr. T. Shaw, Mr. J. Morley *April* 2, 732
- *Richmond Asylum, Qs.* Earl of Erne, Lord Ashbourne; *As.* Lord Ribblesdale *Mar* 25, 8

LUTTRELL, Mr. H. C. F., *Devonshire, Tavistock*
- Easter Recess *April* 1, 606

MACARTNEY, Mr. W. G. E., *Antrim, S.*
- Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 2, 779, 788; *April* 4, 955; *April* 5, 1038
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquor (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1582

MACDONA, Mr. J. C., *Southwark, Rotherhithe*
- Distress in St. Olave's Union *April* 8, 1146: *April* 9, 1292
- Madagascar *April* 23, 1491
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1366
- Ocean Derelicts *April* 9, 1287; *April* 23, 1489
- Poor Law (Electors) Amendment Bill *April* 3, 874
- Queen's Birthday *April* 23, 1582

MACDONALD, Mr. J. A. M., *Tower Hamlets, Bow and Bromley*
- Civil Service Clerks *April* 1, 602
- Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 704, 707, 711
- Legacy and Succession Duty Office *April* 4, 937
- Post Office Servants *April* 4, 910

MACFARLANE, Sir D. H., *Argyllshire*
- Chitral *April* 22, 1403
- Claim against Chili *Mar* 28, 326
- Course of Public Business *April* 1, 607, 608
- Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Bill, 1R. *April* 25, 1656
- Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 273
- Island of Coll—The *Mar* 26, 168
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1340
- Order of Business *April* 9, 1298
- Scotch Herring Fishery *Mar* 29, 467

M'GILLIGAN, Mr. P., *Fermanagh, S.*
- Labourers' Dwellings in Fermanagh *April* 4, 929
- Londonderry Court House *April* 9, 1267
- Magistrates in Fermanagh *April* 4, 928

MACGREGOR, Dr. D., *Inverness-shire*
- Collection of Rates in the Highlands *Mar* 25, 26
- Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 9, 1367; *April* 25, 1657
- Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *April* 25, 1699
- Government and Dr. Macgregor *April* 5, 1032
- Hawaii *April* 25, 1623
- Highlands and Islands Commission *Mar* 26, 153; *April* 9, 1264; *April* 25, 1631
- Ireland and the Naval Programme *Mar* 25, 20
- Island of
  - Coll—The *Mar* 26, 169
  - Lewis—The *Mar* 26, 152

[*cont.*

MACGREGOR, Dr. D.—*cont.*
Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1679, 1680
Local Legislative Assemblies *Mar* 29, 560
Lochmaddy Combination Poorhouse *April* 2, 728
London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 907
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1771, 1777, 1781
Roads and Footpaths in Inverness-shire *April* 2, 728
Supply
£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 373, 374
Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 493

*Macgregor (Dr.) and the Government*
*Personal Explanation*—Dr. Macgregor; [Mr. Speaker;] *April* 5, 1032, 1033

MACINNES, Mr. MILES, *Northumberland, Hexham.*
Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 870

MCLAREN, Mr. W. S. B., *Cheshire, Crewe*
Indian Procedure Bill *April* 9, 1277

MACLURE, Mr. J. W., *Lancashire, S.E., Stretford*
Finance Act and the Colonies *April* 22, 1402

MACNAGHTEN, Lord
Mortgagee's Costs Bill, 2R. *Mar* 28, 319, 320

MACNEILL, Mr. J. G. S., *Donegal, S.*
Ballymacarrett Poor Law Election *April* 1, 569
Distress in
Aughamore *April* 8, 1141
Donegal *Mar* 25, 30; *April* 8, 1142, 1144; *April* 9, 1269
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 103; *April* 1, 632
Killybegs Pier *Mar* 26, 163; *April* 5, 1025
Outrage in County Armagh *April* 1, 568
Railway Accident in Ireland *April* 1, 569
Relief Works in Ireland *Mar* 28, 335; *April* 4, 925, 926
Supply—Report of, £4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 512, 517

MCCARTHY, Mr. J., *Longford, N.*
Longford Quarter Sessions *Mar* 28, 327
Speaker's Retirement *April* 9, 1303

MCDONNELL, Dr., *Queen's Co., Leix*
Swine Fever Order *Mar* 25, 41

M'HUGH, Mr. E. *Armagh, S.*
Distress in Donegal *April* 9, 1268, 1269
Training Ship in Irish Waters *April* 9, 1273

M'HUGH, Mr. P. A., *Leitrim, N.*
Carrying Arms in Ireland *Mar* 26, 167
Distress in North Leitrim *Mar* 26, 167

MALLOCK, Mr. R., *Devon, Torquay*
Army Annual Bill, 2R. *Mar* 28, 438, 439

MANDEVILLE, Mr. F., *Tipperary, S.*
Irish Postal Arrangements *April* 8, 1132
Police in County Tipperary *April* 4, 930

MAPLE, Sir J. BLUNDELL, *Camberwell, Dulwich*
London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 889, 895, 896

**Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill**
*c.* Standing Com. on Trade, make special Rep. *Mar* 25, 48
Order for Consideration of Bill, Mr. T. M. Healy, Colonel Long, Mr. H. Gardner —*April* 1, 700
Consideration of Bill postponed *April* 1, 700

**Market Gardeners' Compensation (No. 2) Bill**
*c.* Rep. without Amendt. *Mar* 25, 48

MATTHEWS, Right Hon. HENRY, *Birmingham, E.*
Established Church Wales Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 87
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1452, 1479, 1486

MAXWELL, Mr. W. J., *Dumfriesshire*
Parish Polling Places *Mar* 28, 342
Scotch Local Government *April* 1, 603

MAXWELL, Sir H. E., *Wigton*
Court of Law Fees (Scotland) Bill *April* 2, 819
Diseased Sheep *April* 25, 1625, 1626
Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 300, 310, 311
Order of Business *April* 9, 1298

*Meaning of Alterations in the Law*
*(Motion)* Marquess of Salisbury, 12, 14, 15, 16; Lord Herschell, 14, 15, 16; Earl of Morley, 16—*Mar* 25

MELLOR, RIGHT HON. J. W. (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means, and Deputy Speaker), *York, W. R., Sowerby*

[*cont.*

MELLOR Right Hon. J. W.—*cont.*

*(Rulings as Chairman of Committees)*

*Supply*—£4,439,258, *Vote on Account*
The Chairman in answer to a question on a point of Order, said, that he was about to call attention to the fact that this was a little irregular, and that the Amendt. had better be withdrawn for the present *Mar* 28, 364
The Chairman did not consider the hon. Member out of Order, but thought that it would be more convenient to keep the questions of Madagascar and Egypt and the Upper Nile distinct *Mar* 28, 400

*Army (Annual) Bill*
The Chairman asked whether the hon. Member was about to move an Amendt. At present there was no question before the House. The hon. Member if he wishes to ask a question must do so on the Motion that the clause stand part of the Bill *Mar* 28, 435
The Chairman ruled certain Amendts. out of Order *Mar* 28, 439
The Chairman said that the hon. Gentleman was now moving the same Amendt. in a different form ; that it was the substance of the Amendt. that he objected to, as it proposed to extend the scope of the original Act to the Indian Army by an Amendt. of the Annual Mutiny Bill, and that can only be done by a separate Bill *Mar* 28, 440

*The Late Speaker*
The Chairman asked the hon. Member to name a co-teller : there being none, he declared that the Ayes had it *April* 23, 1505

*Miscellaneous Rulings*—*Mar* 28, 367, 399

### Merchandise Marks (Files) Bill

*c* Read 2° and Com. to a Select Com. *April* 3, 875

### MERCHANT SHIPPING

*Accommodation for Seamen*, *Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson ; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1135
*Cowes Harbour*, *Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell ; *A.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 25, 25
*Fisheries Committee*, *Qs.* Mr. Lees, Mr. Bowles ; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 2, 720
*Harbours of Refuge*, *Q.* Mr. Clancy ; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 2, 719. *Qs.* Mr. Clancy ; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 9, 1265
*Illegal Trawling*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir ; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 26, 151
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*Pensions*
*Indian Army, Q.* Sir W. Wedderburn; *A.* Mr. G. Russell *April* 4, 907

**Perjury Bill**
*Q.* Mr. Knox; *A.* Sir R. T. Reid *Mar* 28, 354
*c.* 2R. Sir R. T. Reid *(Motion)*, 817, 819; Mr. S. T. Evans, 818; Mr. T. M. Healy, 818, 819; Marquess of Carmarthen, 818—*April* 2
Read 2° *April* 2, 819
Order for Com., Sir R. T. Reid, 1249, 1250; Sir R. Webster, 1249; Sir E. Clarke, 1249; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1250—*April* 8

PERKS, Mr. R. W., *Lincolnshire, Louth*
Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 861

**Pier and Harbour Provincial Orders (No. 1) Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Burt; Read 1° *April* 8, 1126

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
Distress Bill, in Com. *April* 8, 1248
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1751, 1753
Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 374

PIERPOINT, Mr. R., *Warrington*
Army Officers on Leave *April* 2, 729
Cyprus Tribute *April* 8, 1159

**Places of Worship (Leasehold Enfranchisement) Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. S. T. Evans; Read 1° *Mar* 26, 179

PLAYFAIR, LORD (Lord-in-Waiting)
Education Code *Mar* 29, 460, 464

PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 180, 181; *April* 1, 614

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PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R.—*cont.*
London and North Western Railway Bill, 2R. *April* 25, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1581

**Poor Law (Electors) Amendment Bill**
*c.* 2R. Sir T. Fry *(Motion)*, 873; Mr. J. C. Macdona, 874; Mr. T. H. Bolton, 874; Sir R. Temple, 874; Mr. Bartley, 875—*April* 3

**POST OFFICE (England and Wales)**
Postmaster General—Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY
*Alderney*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 350
*Auxiliary Postmen*, *Q.* Mr. Kilbride; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 1, 590
*Code Cablegrams*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1138
*Commissionaires*, *Q.* Major Rasch; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1495
*Edinburgh Telegraph Department*, *Q.* Mr. Wallace; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 323
*Electric Lighting and the Post Office*, *Q.* Mr. Naoroji; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1144
*Four Roads, County Roscommon*, *Q.* Mr. L. P. Hayden; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 340
*Mails*
*American and Scotch*, *Qs.* Mr. J. Wilson; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1280
*(English) in Spain*, *Q.* Mr. Bill; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1151
*Irish*, *Qs.* Mr. Yerburgh, Captain Donelan, Mr. Field, Mr. Kenny; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 1, 565. *Qs.* Mr. W. Kenny, Mr. W. Field, Dr. Kenny; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1281. *Qs.* Captain Donelan, Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1497
*Wexford and Dublin*, *Q.* Mr. Ffrench; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1289
*Manchester Postmen*, *Q.* Mr. Schwann; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 25, 40
*Parcels for the Cape*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 25, 34
*Postal Arrangements (Ireland)*, *Qs.* Mr. Mandeville, Mr. Webb; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1132
*Postal Facilities at Fintray, Aberdeenshire*, *Q.* Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. A. Morley, *April* 9, 1278
*Post Cards*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 25, 18. *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 338. *Qs.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 5, 1028
*Post Offices in Welsh-speaking Districts*, *Q.* Mr. D. Thomas; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1493
*Press Telegraphic Messages*, *Q.* Mr. Jackson; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 4, 919
*Provincial Telegraph Clerks*, *Q.* Mr. Knox; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *Mar* 28, 337
*Re-direction of Letters*, *Q.* Mr. H. Paul; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 25, 1621
*Rural Postmen in Scotland*, *Q.* Captain Hope; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1492
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*POST OFFICE*—cont.
*Savings Bank*, Return ordered *April* 25, 1728
*Servants*, *Q.* Mr. J. A. M. Macdonald; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 4, 910
*Sub-Postmaster of Ashleagh, County Mayo*, *Qs.* Dr. R. Ambrose, Mr. W. Johnston; *As.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 25, 1624
*Sub-Postmasters*, *Q.* Mr. Colston; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1151
*Telegraph and Postal Facilities to Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1274
*Telegraphists' Holidays*, *Q.* Mr. Butcher; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1149
*Telephone Service Committee*, *Q.* Mr. Morton; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 25, 45
*Time Marks on Letters*, *Q.* Lord Ashbourne; *A.* Lord Tweedmouth *April* 8, 1119
*Unstamped Post Cards*, *Q.* Mr. Henniker Heaton; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 8, 1153

**Post Office Act (1891) Amendment Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Strachey; Read 1° *April* 3, 876

POWELL, Sir F. S., *Wigan*
Charity Commission *April* 23, 1553
Established Church (Wales) Bill *April* 2, 731
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1433
New Code and School Ventilation *April* 9, 1279
Quarantine *April* 9, 1279
Quinquennial Census *April* 9, 1279
Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 367

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford, E.*
Carrick-on-Suir Union *Mar* 29, 468, 469

*Prisons (see under* LAW AND JUSTICE AND POLICE)

(For Scotch and Irish Questions *see under* titles SCOTLAND AND IRELAND)

*Private and Provisional Order, and Confirmation Bills*
*Motions* by Earl of Morley agreed to *Mar* 28, 317
Ordered that Standing Orders 92 and 93 be suspended *April* 9, 1253

*Profit-sharing*
*(Motion)* Mr. A. J. Mundella, 265, 266, 267; Mr. Bryce, 266, 267; Sir M. Hicks-Beach, 266, 267; [Mr. Speaker, 266, 267;] *Mar* 27

PROVAND, Mr. A. D., *Glasgow, Blackfriars*
Women in British India Coal Mines *April* 26, 1736

*Publication of Wills*
*Q.* Mr. Aird; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 26, 1738

*Public Elementary Schools Warned*
Address for Return *April* 8, 1251

**Purchase of Land Bill**
c. Intro., Mr. J. Collings; Read 1º *April* 5, 1033

*Quarantine*
Q. Sir F. S. Powell; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1279

*Queen's Birthday*
Q. Mr. Macdona; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 23, 1502. *Q.* Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 26, 1733

*Quinquennial Census*
*Q.* Sir F. S. Powell; *A.* Mr. Shaw Lefevre *April* 9, 1279

**RAILWAYS**
*Accident in Ireland Q.* Mr. MacNeill; *A.* Mr. J. Bryce *April* 1, 569
*Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen, Qs.* Mr. Hayden, Colonel Nolan; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *Mar* 28, 353. *Qs.* Mr. Hayden, Colonel Nolan; *As.* Sir J. T. Hibbert, Mr. T. Shaw *April* 2, 718. *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 8, 1154. *Q.* Mr. T. Curran; *A.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 8, 1155
*Collapse of a Tunnel, Qs.* Mr. Spencer, Mr. Aird; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 9, 1292
*Defrauding a Railway Company, Q.* Mr. Lees; *A.* Mr. Asquith *April* 2, 733
*Dublin and Garristown, Qs.* Mr. Clancy; *As.* Mr. J. Morley *April* 9, 1291
*Ermusaig, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 29, 473
*Free Grants to Irish Railways, Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 4, 919
*Great Eastern Bill* (see that title)
*Great Southern and Western Bill* (see that title)
*Great Western, Q.* Mr. Dodd; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 5, 1031
*Irish Light Railways, Q.* Mr. Tully; *A.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 2, 723
*Light Railways, Qs.* Mr. J. A. Bright; *As.* Mr. Bryce, Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 940. *Q.* Mr. J. H. Roberts; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 9, 1295
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*Midland Great Western, Q.* Colonel Nolan; *A.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 28, 350
*Mombasa and Uganda Q.* Sir A. K. Rollit; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 25, 1614
*Slavery and the Mombasa Railway, Q.* Mr. J. A. Pease; *A.* Sir E. Grey *April* 2, 714
*Through Rates from Ireland, Q.* Mr. W. Field; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 4, 914
*Times of Trains*, Returns presented, *April* 9, 1255
*Tralee and Dingle, Q.* Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 8, 1139; *April* 23, 1494

RAMSAY, Hon. CHARLES MAULE, *Forfar*
Tuberculosis Commission *April* 23, 1500

RANDELL, Mr. D., *Glamorgan, Gower*
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1479

RASCH, Major F. C., *Essex, S.E.*
Commissionaires at the Post Office *April* 23, 1495
Dublin Garrison *Mar* 28, 346
Great Eastern Railway Bill *April* 2, 708
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*Rateable Value of Lands, &c., 1869–70, and Gross Estimated Rental and Rateable Value of Lands, &c., 1894*
Return Pres. *April* 4, 940

*Rating of Government Property*
Sir A. Rollit, 1738, 1783; Mr. Pickersgill, 1751, 1753; [Mr. Speaker, 1753, 1777;] Colonel Hughes, 1754, 1775; Mr. Kearley, 1756; Mr. Burdett-Coutts, 1757; Mr. W. F. D. Smith, 1765; Mr. J. Caldwell, 1766; Mr. Byles, 1767; Mr. Bartley, 1768, 1770; Mr. Harry Lawson, 1769, 1770, 1771; Mr. T. G. Bowles, 1770, 1771; Dr. Macgregor, 1771, 1777, 1781; Sir J. T. Hibbert, 1772, 1775, 1783; Mr. A. C. Morton, 1775; Mr. Bousfield, 1776, 1777; Mr. W. Long, 1777; Mr. J. Stuart, 1778; Mr. J. Burns, 1779, 1781; Mr. J. Rowlands, 1782; Mr. Anstruther, 1783; Sir J. Lubbock, 1783 *(Division, 1783)—April* 26

REAY, LORD (Under Secretary of State for India)
Chitral, *Mar* 25, 1; *April* 2, 703; *April* 4, 877; *April* 8, 1118

REDMOND, Mr. J., *Waterford City*
Distress in
  Glenamaddy Union *April* 1, 586
  Tuam *April* 1, 586
East Wicklow Writ *April* 9, 1256
Irish Soldiers and the Shamrock *April* 4, 910
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REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K., *Clare, E.*
Chitral *April* 25, 1615
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  Glencoe and Derry *April* 25, 1619
  Mayo *Mar* 25, 28
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  Mail Service *April* 23, 1497
  Soldiers and the Shamrock *April* 2, 712, 713, 714; *April* 4, 910; *April* 23, 1500, 1501, 1502
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REDMOND, Mr. W. H. K.—*cont.*
- Medical Services in the Nenagh Union *April* 25, 1619
- Refusal to allow a Meeting in County Cork *April* 9, 1287, 1288
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1570, 1571, 1575, 1577, 1580
- Supply of Pork to the Navy *Mar* 25, 22
- Supply
  - £4,439,268 Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 433
  - Report of—£4,439,268 for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 494

**Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Channel Islands Children) Bill**
- *c.* Intro., Mr. G. Russell ; Read 1° *Mar* 25, 49
  - 2R. Mr. G. Russell, 1009, 1010 ; Mr. Stuart-Wortley, 1010 *April* 4
  - Read 2° *April* 4, 1010
  - Considered in Com. and Rep. without Amendment *April* 8, 1250
  - Read 3° and Passed *April* 8, 1250
- *l.* Read 1ª *April* 9, 1253

**Registers of Electors (Duplicate Entries) Bill**
- *c.* Intro., Mr. J. W. Sidebottom ; Read 1° *Mar* 28, 442

REID, SIR R. T., (Attorney General), *Dumfries Burghs*
- Distress Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 699, 700 ; *April* 8, 1248 ; *April* 24, 1603
- Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 760
- Larceny Act Amendment Bill, 2R. *April* 2, 817
- Local Veto Bill *April* 8, 1244
- Perjury Bill *Mar* 28, 354 ; *April* 2, 817, 819 ; *April* 8, 1249, 1250

RENSHAW, Mr. C. B., *Renfrew, W.*
- Cock-fighting *April* 26, 1735
- Diseased Sheep *April* 25, 1626
- Farm Servants (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 304, 307, 315
- Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1684, 1696
- Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 284
- Local Government (Scotland) Act 1894 *Mar* 25, 24
- Local Government (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1676
- Scotch Education Code *Mar* 28, 343, 344

RENTOUL, Mr., J. A., *Down, E.*
- Civil Service Second Division Clerks *April* 1, 574
- Labourers' Cottages in Strabane Union *April* 9, 1278

RIBBLESDALE, LORD (Master of the Buckhounds)
- Ecclesiastical Tithe Rent-charge in Ireland *April* 4, 883, 888
- Richmond Lunatic Asylum, *Mar* 25, 9, 10, 11
- Shop Hours Bill, Motion for 2R. *Mar* 28, 319

*Richmond Lunatic Asylum*
- *Qs.* Earl of Erne ; Lord Ashbourne ; *As.* Lord Ribblesdale *Mar* 25, 8

RIDLEY, Right Hon. Sir M. W., Bart., *Lancashire, N., Blackpool*
- Election of Speaker *April* 10, 1382

ROBERTS, Mr. J. BRYN, *Carnarvonshire, Eifion*
- London and North Western Railway Bill, 3R. *April* 25, 1608, 1609

ROBERTS, Mr. J. H., *Denbighshire, W.*
- Denbigh
  - Asylum *April* 9, 1290
  - Cattle Market *April* 26, 1735
- Light Railways *April* 9, 1295
- Welsh Churchyard Dispute *April* 9, 1262

ROBERTSON, MR. EDMUND (Civil Lord of the Admiralty), *Dundee*
- Admiralty Rights at Howth *April* 9, 1273
- Belleville Boilers *April* 1, 589
- Boiler Explosion at
  - Glasgow *April* 4, 921
  - Govan *April* 2, 734
- China and Japan *April* 9, 1294
- Coastguard Officers, *Mar* 26, 154
- H.M.S. "*Sharpshooter*" *April* 9, 1294
- Illegal Trawling on the Scotch Coast *April* 23, 1495
- Ireland and the Naval Programme *Mar* 25, 20, 21
- Landslip at Sandgate *April* 9, 1280
- "Machinery of Warships"—Mr. Durston's Paper on *April* 25, 1628
- Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1331, 1335, 1336, 1345, 1358, 1359, 1360
- Ocean Derelicts *April* 9, 1287 ; *April* 23, 1489
- Proposed Harbour Works at Dover *April* 1, 597
- Queen's Birthday *April* 26, 1733
- Supply of Pork to the Navy *Mar* 25, 22
- Supply –£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 367
- Training Ship
  - For Queenstown *April* 23, 1496, 1497
  - In Irish Waters *April* 9, 1273
- Troopships *Mar* 25, 36
- Wages and Government Contracts *April* 1, 583

ROBY, Mr. H. J., *Lancashire, S.E., Eccles*
- Church Patronage Bill *April* 3, 871
- Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 123, 125 ; *Mar* 26, 181

ROCHE, Mr. J., *Galway, E.*
- Redemption of Rent Act (Ireland) *April* 2, 724
- Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 725

ROLLIT, Sir A. K., *Islington, S.*
Discharge of Fever Patients *April* 1, 572
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ROSS, Mr. J., *Londonderry City*
Irish Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 297
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ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, Harwich*
Education Code—The New *Mar* 26, 155
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ROUNDELL, Mr. C., *York, W.R., Skipton*
Endowed Secondary Schools *April* 1, 568

ROWLANDS, Mr. J., *Finsbury, E.*
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1782

*Royal Liver Friendly Society*
*Q.* Mr. J. Heath ; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 25, 1628

*Royal Patriotic Fund*
*Q.* Mr. Kearley ; *A.* Mr. T. Ellis *Mar* 28, 357
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*Rule of the Road at Sea*
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RUSSELL, MR. G. W. E. (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *North Beds*
British India *April* 4, 908
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RUSSELL, Mr. G. W. E.—*cont.*
Dismissal of an Army Surgeon in Madras *April* 25, 1630
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 193
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  Army *April* 1, 603
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  Cantonments *April* 4, 922, 923
  Frontiers *April* 2, 721, 722, 723
  Import Duties *Mar* 26, 168
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  Procedure Bill *April* 9, 1277
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Surgeon Major Generals in India *April* 9, 1286
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RUSSELL, Mr. T. W., *Tyrone, S.*
Land Law (Ireland) Bill *April* 2, 749, 752, 788, 795, 805 ; *April* 4, 943, 952, 955, 989
Local Veto Bill *April* 5, 1032 ; *April* 8, 1232
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 24, 1564, 1571, 1575, 1577, 1594, 1600

**Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Ireland) Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. T. W. Russell *(Motion)* 1564, 1571, 1575, 1577, 1594 ; Mr. C. Diamond, 1569 ; Mr. W. Redmond, 1570, 1571, 1575, 1577, 1580 ; Mr. J. Morley, 1576, 1578, 1580 ; Mr. D. Plunket, 1581 ; Mr. W. Macartney, 1582 ; Mr. A. Webb, 1583 ; Mr. Johnston, 1584 ; Mr. D. Crilly, 1585, 1591, 1595 ; Mr. J. Wilson 1591 ; [Mr. Speaker, 1591, 1594 ;] Mr. J. H. Wilson, 1595 ; Sir C. Cameron, 1596 ; Mr. D. Barton, 1597 ; Mr. M. Austin, 1598 *(Division,* 1600*)*—*April* 24
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**Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. Conybeare ; Read 1° *April* 8, 1251

SALISBURY, Marquess of
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Saunderson, Colonel E. J., *Armagh, N.*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 693
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Q. Mr. G. Howell; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 1, 605

Schwann, Mr. C. E., *Manchester, N.*
Armenia
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**SCOTLAND**
Secretary for—Sir G. O. Trevelyan
Lord Advocate—Mr. J. B. Balfour
Solicitor General—Mr. T. Shaw
*Administration*, *Qs.* Mr. Weir; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 28, 354
*Boundaries*, *Q.* Mr. Hozier; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 25, 1626
*Cess and Stent*, *Q.* Mr. Whitelaw; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *April* 2, 728
*Church of Scotland*, *Qs.* Mr. J. A. Campbell, Sir M. Stewart, Mr. Hozier; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan, Sir W. Harcourt *Mar* 26, 161
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*Grand Committee*, *Q.* Mr. Dalziel; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 23, 1503. *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 25, 1634
*Herring Fishery*, *Q.* Sir D. Macfarlane; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *Mar* 29, 467
*Highlands and Islands Commission*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Dr Macgregor; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 26, 152. *Qs.* Dr. Macgregor, *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 9, 1264. *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Dr. Macgregor; *As.* Sir J. Hibbert *April* 25, 1631
*Illegal Trawling*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 26, 151. *Q.* Mr. Crombie; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson *April* 23, 1495
*Island of*
*Coll*, *Qs.* Sir D. Macfarlane, Dr. Macgregor; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 26, 168
*Lewis*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir, Dr. Macgregor; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 26, 152
*Kingcase Rifle Range, Ayrshire*, *Q.* Mr. Wason; *A.* Mr. Campbell-Bannerman *Mar* 29, 467
*Lighthouses*, *Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 29, 472
*Local Government*, *Q.* Mr. W. J. Maxwell; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 1, 603
*Local Government (Scotland) Act*, 1894, *Qs.* Mr. Crombie, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Renshaw; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan, Mr. J. B. Balfour *Mar* 25, 23
*Local Government Bill*, *Qs.* Sir C. J. Pearson, Mr. Hozier; *As.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 4, 939
*Lochmaddy Combination Poorhouse*, *Q.* Dr. Macgregor; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 2, 728
*Mysterious Death in Ballo Loch, Fife*, *Q.* Mr. Paul; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *April* 25, 1612
*Parishes*, *Q.* Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 8, 1140
*Parish Polling Places*, *Qs.* Mr. Maxwell, Captain Hope; *As.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 28, 342
*Postal Facilities at Fintray, Aberdeen*, *Q.* Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1278
*Potato Crops in Ross-shire*, *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *April* 26, 1734
*Roads and Footpaths in Inverness*, *Q.* Dr. Macgregor; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 2, 728
*Rural Postmen*, Q. Captain Hope; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 23, 1492
*Severe Weather and the School Attendance*, Q. Dr. Farquharson; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 2, 715
*Stonehaven Harbour*, Q. Mr. Crombie; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *Mar* 28, 322
*Telegraphic and Postal Facilities to Lewis*, *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. A. Morley *April* 9, 1274
*Village School Attendance*, *Q.* Sir J. Fergusson; *A.* Sir G. O. Trevelyan *April* 25, 1611
*Workmen's Dwellings*, *Q.* Mr. J. Caldwell; *A.* Mr. J. B. Balfour *April* 26, 1737

**Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Bill**
*l.* Rep. from Select Com. made
Rep. with Amendts., and com. to a Com. of the Whole House *Mar* 28, 317
Com. of Whole House deferred *April* 9, 1253

**Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill**
*l.* Order referring Bill to Select Com. discharged *Mar* 28, 317

*Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections*
Mr. Dalziel *(Motion)*, 1082, 1086; Mr. W. H. Holland, 1086, 1091; Mr. J. Addison, 1089; Mr. A. Cross, 1091, 1102; Mr. Billson, 1093; Mr. Hobhouse, 1095; Mr. Snape, 1096; Mr. Bolton, 1099; Mr. Shaw Lefevre, 1100, 1102; Mr. J. W. Lowther, 1104; Mr. Conybeare, 1110; Mr. Courtney, 1112 *(Division, 1115)*—*April* 5

Seton-Karr, Mr. H., *St. Helens*
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1438, 1487, 1488
Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 830

Sexton, Mr. T., *Kerry, N.*
Distress in Kerry County *Mar* 25, 29, 30
East Wicklow Writ *April* 9, 1256
Factory Inspection in Ireland *Mar* 25, 31, 32
Irish
  Board of Lights *Mar* 26, 172
  Lights Board Bill, 2R. *Mar* 27, 284, 290, 295
Land Law Ireland Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 1050, 1051, 1066, 1067, 1071
Trinity College, Dublin *Mar* 26, 168; *Mar* 28, 347

Shaw, Mr. C. E., *Stafford*
Prison Clerkships *April* 9, 1296

SHAW, Mr. THOMAS (Solicitor General for Scotland), *Hawick Burghs*
Castlerea and Ballaghaderreen Railway *April* 2, 719
Distress in Leitrim *April* 2, 724
Land Law (Ireland) Bill, 2R. *April* 5, 1033, 1035, 1038, 1073
Portrane Lunatic Asylum, County Dublin *April* 2, 732
Redemption of Rent Act (Ireland) *April* 2, 725
Royal Irish Constabulary *April* 2, 725

Shaw-Stewart, Mr. M. H., *Renfrew, E.*
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill, 1R. *April* 25, 1666
Stirling Cattle Market *Mar* 25, 22

**Shop Hours Bill**
*l.* 2R. Motion by Lord Ribblesdale *Mar* 28, 319
Read 2ª *Mar* 28, 319
[*cont.*

*Shop Hours Bill*—cont.
Passed through Com. without Amendt. *Mar* 29, 445
Read 3ª *April* 1, 563
Royal Assent *April* 9, 1253

Sidmouth, Viscount
Palestine Exploration *April* 2, 702, 703

Smith, Mr. Harry, *Falkirk Burghs*
Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill *April* 25, 1688

Smith, Mr. J. Parker, *Lanark, Partick*
Income Tax on Shipping *April* 4, 937, 938
Scotch Education Code 1895 *April* 4, 1018
Slavery in East Africa *April* 4, 927

Smith, Mr. S., *Flintshire*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *April* 1, 566, 658, 662
Excise Revenue in the Punjab *April* 1, 580

Smith, Mr. W., *Lancashire, N., North Lonsdale*
Ulverstone Town Bank Grammar School *April* 4, 923

Smith, Hon. W. F. Danvers, *Strand*
Government Clothing Sub-contractors *April* 8, 1158
Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1765
Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 375

Snape, Mr. T., *Lancashire, S.E., Heywood*
Second Ballot at Parliamentary Elections *April* 5, 1096

**Solicitors (Ireland) Bill**
*l.* In Com., Rep. without Amendment and re-Com. to Standing Com. *Mar* 28, 319
Rep. from Standing Com. with Amendts. *April* 2, 702
Amendts. Rep. *April* 5, 1021

SPEAKER, Mr.
The Right Hon. ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL, *Warwick and Leamington*

Address to the House, announcing his retirement from the Chair *April* 8, 1126
Address to the House on his retirement *April* 9, 1307

*Questions*
While this is no doubt a personal matter, it hardly comes within the denomination of a personal explanation. The hon. Gentleman will take his own course as to what
[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr. (Mr. PEEL)—*cont.*
*Questions*—cont.
he intends to do, but this is hardly a matter which comes within the category of a personal explanation *April* 5, 1032

*Rules and Order of Debate*
Hon. Members were alluding to the fact that the hon. Gentleman was reading from a newspaper. It would be as well if the hon. Gentleman compressed the newspaper into as small a compass as possible *Mar* 25, 125
The object to be aimed at seemed to be to give the Committee latitude, and, therefore, perhaps the case would be met by inserting "a Clause or Clauses" *Mar* 27, 266
The Motion was placed in the hands of the Clerk, and he put it in the ordinary way from the Chair *Mar* 27, 268
An hon. Member objected, but that could not be done, because the Bill was by order *April* 2, 704
The particulars into which the hon. Member is now entering are outside the Bill, and are not relative to the immediate issue. There is nothing in the Bill with reference to the hours of labour, and I do not think the hon. Member can cite particular instances as a reason for punishing a company when they come to this House to ask for further powers *April* 2, 705
If the hon. Member has agreed with the promoters of this Bill that the Third Reading should be postponed until after Easter it is competent for that arrangement to be come to; but I do not think it would be competent for the hon. Member upon the London and North Western Railway Bill, or upon any particular railway Bill, to raise the general question of the policy pursued by a railway company. That has been ruled out of Order before, and I should rule it out of Order in the case of a Bill introduced at the time of Private Business. Of course, if the hon. Member wishes the Bill put off and objects to it, it must be put off from to-day, and, by arrangement, it can be put off until some future day which the hon. and learned Member may agree upon with the promoters. Perhaps if it were put off until Monday some arrangement might be come to with the promoters to have the Third Reading at a later period *April* 5, 1023.

*Miscellaneous Rulings*
*Mar* 25, 17, 133, 134; *Mar* 29, 513; *April* 1, 567, 598; *April* 2, 704; *April* 5, 1022, 1033

THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM COURT GULLY, *Carlisle*
Address to the Lords after receiving Her Majesty's Approbation *April* 22, 1398
Report to House of Commons of Her Majesty's Approbation *April* 22, 1399
[*cont.*

SPEAKER, Mr. (Mr. GULLY)—*cont.*
*Questions*
The hon. Gentleman is exceeding the limits, and should give notice of that question in the ordinary way *April* 23, 1502

*Rules and Order of Debate*
The hon. Member is not entitled to do more than ask for the authorities *April* 24, 1591
It would be better if the hon. Member discontinued to read extracts at much greater length, as there is only a short time left, which could not be profitably employed on any other measure *April* 24, 1594
The hon. Member proposes to object to the Third Reading of this Bill on the ground that the railway company have adopted a certain policy as regards the non-employment of what the hon. Gentleman describes as monoglot Welsh platelayers. That would be a course that would be out of Order on a Bill of this kind and at this hour. The time devoted to Private Business should be consumed solely with those matters which are relevant to Private Business. The conditions of employment is a matter of general policy not confined to a single railway company; it does not affect the making of this particular line; it does not affect the particular locality or the particular public for whom the line is to be made; it is a question of policy which refers to all railway companies, at least, in all parts of Wales. It should be applicable not to any one company only, but to all companies working railways in any part of the country. Under these circumstances the course of argument which the hon. Member is adopting is out of Order on this occasion *April* 25, 1606
Although the Amendment stands on the Paper it will not be in Order; it is quite foreign to the subject-matter of the Motion *April* 26, 1753
The hon. Gentleman is entitled to make an explanation if the hon. Member who is speaking gives way to him *April* 26, 1777

*Miscellaneous Rulings*
*April* 22, 1488; *April* 24, 1604; *April* 25, 1608

*Speaker, Mr.*
At the Bar of the House of Lords, to receive Her Majesty's Approval under Commission (*see* PARLIAMENT—LORDS)
*Election of*—
The Serjeant-at-Arms having brought the Mace, and laid it under the Table, Sir W. Harcourt addressed himself to Sir Reginald Palgrave (Clerk of the House) 1369; Mr. Whitbread, 1369, 1385; Mr. Birrell, 1372; Sir John Mowbray, 1373; Mr. J. L. Wharton, 1379; Mr. W. C. Gully, 1380; Sir M. W. Ridley, 1382;
[*cont.*

*Speaker, Mr.*—cont.
  *Election of*—cont.
    Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1383, 1385, 1390, 1391, 1393, 1394; Sir W. Harcourt, 1389, 1390, 1391, 1394. *(Division,* 1394.*)* On the result of the Division being declared, Mr. Speaker-Elect (Mr. W. C. Gully) standing on the upper step of the Chair addressed the House 1394
    The Serjeant-at-Arms then replaced the Mace upon the Table, and Mr. Speaker-Elect took his seat in the Chair. Sir W. Harcourt 1395, 1396; Mr. A. J. Balfour 1396—*April* 10
  *Retirement of*—
    Mr. Speaker 1126; Sir W. Harcourt 1128; Mr. A. J. Balfour 1129—*April* 8
    Sir W. Harcourt 1299, 1307; Mr. A. J. Balfour 1301, 1307, 1308; Mr. J. McCarthy 1303; Mr. J. Chamberlain 1304; Mr. J. Redmond 1305; Mr. D. Naoroji 1306; Mr. Speaker 1307—*April* 9
    Her Majesty's Answer to the Address. Resolution reported and agreed to *April* 24, 1602
  *The Late*—
    In Com., Sir W. Harcourt 1504, 1505; Mr. J. Keir Hardie 1504, 1505; [The Chairman 1505]—*April* 23

**Speaker's (Mr.) Retirement Bill**
*c.* Intro. Mr. Mellor; Read $1^{o}$ *April* 24, 1603
  Read $2^{o}$ *April* 25, 1635

Spencer, Mr. E., *West Bromwich*
  Collapse of a Tunnel *April* 9, 1292

Spicer, Mr. A., *Monmouth Boroughs*
  City and Members of Parliament *Mar* 26, 162, 163

Stanhope, Earl
  Education Code, *Mar* 29, 464

**Stannaries Court Abolition Bill**
*l.* 2R. Lord Herschell *(Motion)* *April* 9, 1254; Read $2^{a}$ *April* 9, 1254

**Statute Law Revision Bill**
  Message from Lords, Select Com. nominated, &c. *Mar* 26, 264
  Message from Commons acquainting Lords of Nomination of Com. *Mar* 28, 317

**Steam Engines (Persons in Charge) Bill**
*c.* 2R. Mr. W. Allan *(Motion)*, 821, 828, 842; Mr. C. Fenwick, 823, 843; Sir A. Hickman, 826, 841; Mr. W. F. Lawrence, 827, 828; Mr. J. A. Pease, 828; Mr. Heneage, 829, 834; Mr. Seton-Karr, 830; Mr. Oldroyd, 831; Mr. J. Burns, 832, 834; Mr. Cochrane, 835; Mr. Forwood, 836; Mr. Bryce, 837; Mr. Cayzer, 839; Mr. D. Crawford, 841; Sir E. Harland, 841, 842; Mr. Warner, 843; Mr. Palmer, 843—*April* 3
  Read $2^{o}$ and Referred to a Select Com. *April* 3, 843

STEVENSON, Mr. F. S. (Parliamentary Charity Commissioner), *Suffolk, Eye*
  Armenian Prisoners *Mar* 25, 36
  Charity Commission *April* 23, 1528, 1531
[*cont.*

Stevenson, Mr. F. S.—*cont.*
  Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Allotments *April* 9, 1274
  Endowed Secondary Schools *April* 1, 568
  Parish Councils *Mar* 26, 165
  Ulverstone Town Bank Grammar School *April* 4, 923

Stewart, Sir Mark J., Bart., *Kirkcudbrightshire*
  Church of Scotland *Mar* 26, 162

Stock, Mr. J. H., *Liverpool, Walton*
  Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 217

Strachey, Mr. E., *Somerset, S.*
  Light Railways Bill, *April* 25, 1714, 1715
  Parish Meetings *Mar* 28, 342
  Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill *April* 25, 1727

Stuart, Mr. J., *Shoreditch, Hoxton*
  London County Council Tramways Bill *April* 4, 889, 890, 897, 900
  Rating of Government Property *April* 26, 1778

Sullivan, Mr. T. D., *Donegal, W.*
  Ballymahon Dispensary District *Mar* 25, 34
  Distress in Donegal *April* 8, 1142; *April* 9, 1271

**SUPPLY**
VOTE ON ACCOUNT 1895-96.

£4,439,268
  In Com., Sir R. Temple, 357, 373, 374, 419, 425; Sir J. T. Hibbert, 358, 366, 367, 370, 376, 379, 380, 381; Sir A. K. Rollit *(Amendt.)*, 358, 378; Mr. A. C. Morton, 362, 366, 378, 379, 387; Mr. R. G. Webster, 363, 368; Mr. T. G. Bowles, 364, 365, 376, 409; [Chairman, 364, 367, 399, 400;] Mr. Bryce, 365, 366, 367; Colonel Nolan, 365, 366, 379, 380; Mr. Tomlinson, 365, 367, 387; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 365, 388, 426; Mr. Hanbury, 366, 378; Mr. Bartley, 366, 367, 378, 386, 434; Sir F. S. Powell, 367; Mr. E. Robertson, 367; Sir R. E. Webster, 368, 385, 386; Colonel Lockwood, 369; Dr. Macgregor, 373, 374; Mr. Pickersgill, 374; Mr. W. F. D. Smith, 375; Sir A. Hayter, 375; Mr. H. L. W. Lawson 376; *(Division* 379:) Mr. Field, 379, 380, 381; Admiral Field *(Amendt.)*, 381, 384, 385; Mr. Asquith, 382, 384, 386, 387; Captain Bethell, 383; Mr. J. L. Wharton, 384; Mr. Stuart-Wortley, 384; Mr. Crosfield 385 *(Amendt. withdrawn,* 385); Mr. J. Burns, 387; Major Darwin *(Amendt.)*, 395; Mr. W. Johnston, 399, 400; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 399, 400, 407, 431; Mr. J. W. Lowther 400; Sir E. Grey, 403, 424, 425, 426; Mr. G. Curzon, 420; Mr. Labouchere 416, 425 *(Amendt. withdrawn,* 426); Mr. Arnold-Forster *(Amendt.)* 426; Sir W. Harcourt, 430, 434; Mr. S. Buxton, 430, 434; Mr. F. G. Banbury, 433; Mr. W. Redmond, 433; *(Amendt. withdrawn* 434). Vote agreed to *Mar* 28
[*cont.*

*SUPPLY*—cont.
£4,439,268—*Report of*
Mr. Hanbury, 475; Sir C. Dilke, 481, 483; Sir G. Baden-Powell, 482, 483; Mr. Henniker Heaton, 484, 486; Mr. S. Buxton, 485, 486, 489, 495, 496; Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, 487, 489, 496, 497; Mr. Arnold Forster, 490, 492, 493; Dr. Clark, 492; Dr. Macgregor, 493; Mr. W. Redmond, 494; Mr. J. G. Talbot *(Amendt.)*, 497, 498, 502; Mr. Acland, 498, 503, 506, 509, 514; Sir R. E. Webster, 499; Mr. H. Owen, 500, 502 *(Amendt. withdrawn* 505); Mr. Bartley, 505 *(Amendt.)*, 506, 513; Sir R. Temple, 508; Sir J. Mowbray, 508; Mr. Jebb, 509; Sir W. Hart Dyke, 511; Mr. MacNeill, 512, 517; Mr. T. W. Legh, 513, 514, 518; [Mr. Speaker, 513;] Mr. T. G. Bowles, 513; *(Division*, 514); Mr. J. O'Brien, 515, 517; Mr. J. Burns, 517, 518; Mr. Mundella, 518; Major Rasch, 519; Mr. W. Field, 520; Mr. A. Jeffreys, 520; Mr. J. Bryce, 520; Sir W. Harcourt, 521. The House then agreed with Com., 521 *Mar* 29

**Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act (1887) Amendment Bill**
*c.* Intro., Mr. M. Healy; Read 1° *Mar* 27, 316

**Supreme Court (Officers) Bill**
*Motion* for Leave to introduce Bill, Mr. Asquith *Mar* 25, 49
*c.* Intro., Mr. Asquith; Read 1° *Mar* 25, 49

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Church Patronage Bill, 2R. *April* 3, 863
Education Code—The New *Mar* 26, 157; *April* 2, 727
Supply—Report of, £4,439,268, for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 497, 498, 502

TEMPLE, Sir R., Bart., *Surrey, Kingston*
Indian Civil Service *Mar* 29, 474
Japanese Commercial Privileges in China *April* 25, 1621
Naval Works Bill, 2R. *April* 9, 1344, 1345
Poor Law (Electors) Amendment Bill *April* 3, 874
Supply
£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 357, 373, 374, 419, 425
Report of—£4,439,268, for Vote on Account *Mar* 29, 508

TENNANT, Mr. H. J., *Berwickshire*
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1411

THOMAS, Mr. ABEL, *Carmarthen, E.*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 64, 65

THOMAS, Mr. ALFRED, *Glamorgan, E.*
Established Church (Wales) Bill, 2R. *Mar* 26, 216

THOMAS, Mr. DAVID, *Merthyr Tydvil*
Glamorganshire Intermediate Education Scheme *April* 25, 1627
Government Bills *Mar* 25, 42
[*cont.*

THOMAS, Mr. DAVID—*cont.*
Post Offices in Welsh-speaking Districts *April* 23, 1493
Snailbeach Quartz Mine Accident *Mar* 25, 17
Welsh Emigrants *April* 25, 1628

THORNTON, Mr. P. M., *Clapham*
Indoor Paupers in the Metropolis *April* 1, 581, 582

*Tithe on Agricultural Land*
*Q.* Major Rasch; *A.* Sir W. Harcourt *April* 23, 1502

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Army Annual Bill, 2R. *Mar* 25, 134; *April* 9, 1364
Coal Mines Regulation Bill *April* 22, 1488
Course of Public Business *April* 1, 607
Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill *April* 9, 1367
Factories and Workshops Bill, 2R. *April* 22, 1458, 1460, 1487
Light Railways Bill *April* 25, 1718
Metropolitan Police (Receiver) Bill, 2R. *April* 4, 1010
Prison Clerks *April* 5, 1025, 1026
Retaliatory Tariffs *Mar* 29, 472
Supply—£4,439,268, Vote on Account *Mar* 28, 365, 367, 387
Tramways (Local Authorities) Bill *April* 24, 1560
Volunteer Camp Canteens *April* 23, 1494

**TRADE, BOARD OF**
President—Mr. JAMES BRYCE
Secretary—Mr. THOMAS BURT
*Accommodation for Seamen, Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1135
*Boiler Explosion at Govan Qs.* Mr. W. Allan, Mr. Forwood; *As.* Mr. Bryce, Mr. E. Robertson *April* 2, 734
*Collapse of a Tunnel, Qs.* Mr. Spencer, Mr. Aird; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 9, 1.92
*Cowes Harbour, Q.* Sir G. Baden-Powell; *A.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 25, 25
*Erbusaig Railway* (see RAILWAYS)
*Fisheries Committees, Qs.* Mr. Lees, Mr. Bowles; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 2, 720
*Foreign Prison-made Goods Qs.* Colonel H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 4, 933
*Government Bills, Qs.* Sir A. K. Rollit, Mr. Cayzer, Mr. Whiteley, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Wolff; *As.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 28, 327
*Habours of Refuge, Q.* Mr. Clancy; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 2, 719. *Qs.* Mr. Clancy; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 9, 1265
*Irish Lights Board, Qs.* Mr. J. O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Wolff; *As.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 26, 171
*Kitchen Boiler Explosions, Q.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 25, 1631
*Measures in the Potteries, Q.* Mr. W. Allen; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 25, 1627
*Notice of Accidents Act, Q.* Sir A. K. Rollit; *A.* Mr. Bryce, *Mar* 29, 471
*Ocean Derelicts, Qs.* Mr. Macdona; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, Mr. Bryce *April* 23, 1489
*Paper—Hand and Mould made, Q.* Mr. E. Lees; *A.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 2, 712
*Parochial Charities, Q.* Mr. W. Allen; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 2, 730
[*cont.*

*TRADE, BOARD OF*—cont.
  *Patents, Qs.* Mr. A. C. Morton, Mr. J. Burns; *As.* Mr. Bryce *April* 25, 1618
  *Pilot and Distress Signals, Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 1, 587. *Qs.* Mr. H. S. Foster, Mr. T. G. Bowles; *As.* Mr. T. Burt *April* 22, 1401
  *Railways* (see that title)
  *Royal Canal, Ireland,* Q. Mr. Tuite; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 4, 916
  *Scotch Lighthouses, Qs.* Mr. J. G. Weir; *As.* Mr. Bryce *Mar* 29, 472
  *Shipment of Sailors and Firemen at Foreign Ports, Qs.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1134
  *Trade and Navigation Returns, Q.* Mr. Brookfield; *A.* Mr. T. Burt *April* 26, 1736
  *Trawl Fishing and the Rule of the Road at Sea, Q.* Mr. H. S. Foster; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 1, 578
  *Tuam Fire, Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1153
  *Weighing Seamen's Food, Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1136
  *Welsh Emigrants Q.* Mr. D. Thomas; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 25, 1628
  *Winding-up of Public Companies, Q.* Mr. Boulnois; *A.* Mr. Bryce *April* 8, 1150 *Qs.* Mr. Bowles, Mr. Boulnois; *As.* Mr. Bryce, Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 25, 1632

**Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill**
  Read 2° *Mar* 29, 523
  In Com., Colonel Kenyon Slaney, 1726; Mr. T. H. Bolton 1726, 1727; Sir J. T. Hibbert, 1726, 1727, 1728; Mr. E. Strachey, 1727; Mr. W. L. Jackson, 1727; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1727; Mr. Bromley Davenport, 1728—*April* 25

*Tramways (Ireland) (No. 2) Redemption*
  Com. to consider expediency *April* 1, 564
  Considered in Com.; Resolution by Mr. W. B. Davenport; *Obs.* Sir J. T. Hibbert *April* 2, 820
  Resolution Rep. and Agreed to April 3, 876

**Tramways (Local Authorities) Bill**
  2R. Mr. Schwann *(Motion)*, 1557, 1564; Mr. T. H. Bolton, 1558; Mr. Tomlinson, 1560; Mr. Bryce, 1562—*April* 24
  Read 2° *April* 24, 1564

*Treaty Series, No. 7 (1895)*
  Convention between Great Britain and Roumania respecting False Indications of Origin on Goods. Pres. and Ordered to lie on Table *April* 1, 561

*Treaty Series, No. 8 (1895)*
  Agreement between Great Britain and Russia, respecting the Spheres of Influence of the two Countries in the region of the Pamirs. Pres. and Ordered to lie on Table *April* 5, 1021

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